Life and Times of Raghuji Bhonsle I of Nagpur

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the candidate Km. Shanta Asthana, has actually carried out the work under my supervision and the work presented in this thesis is original.

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PREFACE

The greatest Bhonsle ruler, Raghuji I, has strangely enough, not yet attracted the notice of historians. Apart from an account of his reign in Kale's, 'History of the Nagpur Province' and 'History of Berar (Both in Marathi); Gupte's 'Bakhar of the Bhonsles of Nagpur' (in Marathi), and Wills', 'British Relations with the Nagpur State in the 18th century', no serious attempt has been made to present his momentous reign, his exploits and conquests in proper perspective. This glaring ommission has to be rectified. Historical records are replete with the evidence that Raghuji played an important part in shaping the history of this country. His activities were not confined to the Nagpur State only, but spread to a far greater area of this country, and he contributed greatly to its political, social and cultural life. When Mughals had the upper hand in the political affairs of this country and all seemed lost after the death of Shivaji, he successfully opposed and faced the authority of Mughals in far off Karnatak, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He consolidated the Gond kingdoms of the erstwhile Central Province under his subjugation. During the critical period of 1740-1755, his role was in no way inferior to that of any other character who passed across the screen of history.

The present work is, therefore, an attempt to fill a gap and I have done my best to prepare a critical account of Raghuji's reign on the basis of records in English and Marathi. The result is for others to judge.

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Poona University; Shri G.H.Khare of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal; Poona; Shri B.K.Apte, Head of the History Department; Nagpur University; Shri M.K.Devpujari of Nagpur University; Shri P.L.Saswad-Kar of the Deccan College, Poona; Mrs. R.D.Srivastava, Head of the Medieval and Modern History Department, Mahila College, Lucknow; and the staff of National Archives, New Delhi, for their kind help and valuable suggestions. I am specially indebted to Dr.(Miss) K.Sabarwal Principal, Mahila College, Lucknow, who had always been a source of inspiration and encouragement to me throughout my research work. I also extend my heartful thanks to Dr. Brij Kishore, former Reader, Department of Medieval and Modern Indian History, Lucknow University, who guided me in the initial stages of my research work; my thanks are also due to Dr. R.N.Nagar, the U.G.C. Research Professor of Medieval and Modern Indian History, Lucknow University for his help and valuable suggestions in the completion of my work. Finally, I am really grateful to my supervisor Dr. S.N. Qanungo, Professor and Head of the Department of Medieval and Modern Indian History, Lucknow University, without whose guidance and help I could not have completed my work.

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INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this piece of research work is to study the expansion of the power of the Bhonsles of Nagpur in the 18th century and the achievements of Raghuji I, the founder of the Bhonsle Kingdom. He occupies an important place in Maratha history during the pre-Panipat period and established the kingdom of Nagpur and Berar on firm foundations.

The Marathi sources on Bhonsle history are so scarce and scattered that it is difficult to reconstruct the history of the Bhonsles on their basis. It is said that many of them were destroyed in the war of 1817. Hence the candidate was required to consult such records as she could find in the research institutions in Poona and other places. The Persian records are small in number and not reliable regarding dates, while the English Factory records yield little of value.

Not much has been written on the history of the Bhonsles, so that it still remains an obscure corner of Maratha history. This is very largely due to the paucity of Marathi sources. The remarkable personality of the first Raghuji deserves to be accorded its due place among the heroes of Maratha history, and it is hoped that in our time, with the increase of our knowledge of source materials, we will be able to do ample justice to the remarkable ruler and statesman whose exploits fill such a wide canvas of India's history.

Raghuji I occupies an important place in Maratha history and played a notable part in the Maratha struggle against the Mughals in

the 18th century. He subjugated the Mughal power in the Karnatak, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He set up an independent kingdom but maintained close cooperation with King Shahu and the Peshwa. It must be remembered that the Bhonsles of Nagpur stood by the Peshwa till the last, braving the wrath of British power. We cannot forget how Appa Saheb of Nagpur took the field in support of Baji Rao II, when other Maratha Sardars like Sindhia and Holkar sought shelter in inactivity.

By sheer dint of valour and courage, Raghuji rose to a position of eminence from the humble position of a mere soldier and founded a great kingdom. His position was recognised by the central power which conferred on him, the title of Sena Sahib Subah viz. Commander-in-Chief of Maratha forces. He ruled over his widely stretching dominion for twenty seven years. It shows how the courage of a single individual can materially affect the course of history. He is also partly responsible for the ups and downs of Maratha history in his time. He was a political genius, yet no biography of Raghuji has so far been written either in English or in any other Indian language. No doubt, some eminent scholars, such as Rao Bahadur G.S.Sardesai; K.R. Gupte; Y.M.Kale and others have thrown enough light on this interesting character in the course of their studies in Maratha history. Their verdict is unassailable, but information about Raghuji is meagre in comparison with his active and important career of nearly three decades. It also lacks connected narration. An effort has been made in the present work, to furnish a continuity and this may prove a useful supplement, more detailed and compact, to what these scholars have already written on

the subject. The conclusions here arrived at are not much different from their work, but sometimes it was found necessary to differ from writers of eminence such as Grant Duff. Whenever and wherever it has been done, reasons have been given for it.

Raghuji the Great was the real founder of the Nagpur State. The importance of his position as such has always been recognised in local history. It is less widely realised how prominent and independent a part he played in the Maratha history of his time. Family pretensions provide the key to Nagpur politics in the eighteenth century and colour most of the negotiations of importance which that court pursued with Calcutta, Poona and Hyderabad. On the death of King Shahu in 1749, Raghuji was summoned to Satara where, as the leader of the Marathas, his attitude had a decisive influence on the course of events.

Before his death Raghuji had laid the foundation of a territorial state, nominally subordinate to the Head of the Maratha Empire. Over his wide tract of country he asserted an exclusive right to the collection of the revenue. With Raghuji the Great, the great days of the Nagpur House departed. The Nagpur State reached the zenith of its political and military reputation under Raghuji. His vigorous personality consolidated the kingdom and drew from it a revenue which his sons Janoji and Mudhoji could never realise.

Raghuji's greatness really rested on his far-flung military expeditions. A leader who carried his arms to Allahabad in the north to Madras in the south, and to Bengal in the east was a man worth following. His vigour in the field brought him wealth, made his

services popular and won for it a reputation. Thus, till his death, Raghuji remained a personality to be reckoned with in the politics of Maharashtra. He kept himself well informed, and was occasionally consulted by others in all important matters of state. His valour kept the Peshwa alert. In the dirty game of politics, he sometimes came into clash with the Peshwa, but he never openly opposed him. The clever Peshwa also knew the power of Raghuji. So he was always careful to keep a compromising attitude with Raghuji.

So far no biography of Raghuji has been written on the basis of original sources available on the subject. In the present work, the sparsely spread information in the original sources and in the works of modern writers has been carefully collected, sifted and then woven into a narrative. Some obscure points have been cleared and where material is lacking constructive suggestions have been offered. In particular, Chapter II has been designed to bring out clearly, and to incorporate all the information that has come to light on account of the publication of the book "The Raj-Gond Maharajas of the Satpura Hills" by C.U. Wills. Other books and papers such as the publications of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, and reports of Jenkins, Ramsay and others have also been carefully examined and utilised. (Raghuji played an important part in bringing out these uncivilised and loose kingdoms of the erstwhile Central Province under the Maratha subjugation.) Selection from the Peshwa Daftar, papers of the Bombay Government and other original papers like those from the Purandare Daftar, the Vaidya Daftar, the Chandrachoor Daftar and publications of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, "Marathi Riyasat" in Marathi, "The New

History of the Marathas" by G.S.Sardesai and other publications on the period before and after Shahu's death have been incorporated. Fresh material has been gleaned from the contemporary state papers and incorporated. The thesis is based on the Peshwa Daftar papers and deals with a topic on which not much hitherto is known to an average student of history.

The present work is a synthesis of the original sources available in Marathi, Persian and French aided by secondary sources and works of some eminent modern writers. A band of devoted pioneers like Rajwade, Parasnis, Sane and Sardesai have made available to the public a vast amount of original raw material which was in the difficult Modi script. These scholars have collected old papers and published them in the Devnagri or Balbodh script, thus making them available to research workers. They have classified them and have tried to arrange them chronologically. But on account of the inherent difficulty of the subject, minor errors have crept in, in spite of the care bestowed by these scholars. It is only the official Sanads and formal state papers which bear the date in three eras the Shakur or Muslim, the Shalivahan Shake and the era introduced by Shivaji at his coronation in the year 1674. But the rest are private news- letters, which throw light on very important happenings all over the country, are as a rule without date and sometimes bear only the day and the month. Frequently the addresses and the writer are not mentioned at all. In this work for the conversion of doubtful dates- the "Peshwa Daftar Patren Kalnirnaya Sudharna" of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal has been consulted. As far as possible preference has been given to contemporary writers, who were

active spectators of the events. Chronologies and chronicles have been put to the historical test and their statements accepted only when supported by contemporary evidence. Enough use has been made of the Peshwa Daftar volumes but the dates have been accepted only after they have been critically examined. The Vaidya Daftar, collections of historical letters and other publications have frequently been consulted. Beside these new publications, the indispensable collections of old papers published by Rajwade, Parasnis, Sane and others have been gone through afresh and bits of very useful information have been gleaned from them.

Of the Persian sources Riyazu-s-Salatin translated into English by Abdus Salam, Tarikh-i-Banglah- by Salimullah and Seir Mutaqherin by Golam Hussain have been greatly drawn upon. Of these the unpublished Persian sources such as Muzaffar Nawab and others have been consulted in manuscript as translated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Some old and new journals particularly the "Itihas Sangraha" and "Bharatvarsha" of Parasnis, the "Trimasik" and the "Sammelan Vritis" of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, and the "Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission" have been consulted and they have yielded valuable information.

Since the story of Raghuji deals with twenty seven eventful years of Maratha history, it lies buried under the debris of other material. There are heaps of papers lying unused in the Peshwa Daftar of Poona. As such it cannot be said with any amount of confidence that all that is available on the subject has been discovered, but what is already in hand is enough to give a fairly accurate sketch of this important personality and the times he lived in.

A detailed analysis of the sources has been relegated to the bibliography. The number of the documents and the pages have been given. In the matter of spelling usually the Marathi forms have been adhered to.

Of the French sources-mainly the books edited by A. Martineau have been consulted, viz. Memories de Francois Martin', Letters at conventions des bourerneurs de Pondicherry arec differents Princes Hindus; and La Journal ds Bussy etc. which throw valuable light upon French-Maratha relations.

Abbreviations Explained

1. A.N.	-	Archives Nationales.
2. A.P.	-	Aitihasik Patravayavahar.
3. A.P.L.	-	Aitihasik Patra Lekhsangraha.
4. A.V.	-	Archives de Versailles.
5. B.I.S.M.	-	Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal.
6. BN	-	Bibliothoque Nationale.
7. C.P.C.	-	Calendar of Persian Correspondence.
8. I.H.R.C.	-	Indian Historical Records Commission.
9. J.R.A.S.B.	-	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
10. K.I.S.	-	Kavya Itihas Sangraha.
11. K.S.Y.P.	-	Kavyaitihas Sangrahā Patren Yadin Waghaire.
12. M.I.S.	-	Marathyanchi Itihasanchi Sadhnen.
13. NAF	-	Nonvelles Acquisitions Francaises.
14. N.B.K.P.L.	-	Nagpur Bhonslyanchi Kagad Patra Lekhsangraha
15. N.H.M.	-	New History of the Marathas.
16. N.P.I.	-	Nagpurkar Prantacha Itihas.
17. P.D.	-	Purandare Daftar.
18. P.R.C.	-	Poona Residency Correspondence.
19. R.M.S.H.	-	Raj-Gond Maharajas of Satpura Hills.
20. S.P.D.	-	Selections from Peshwa Daftar.
21. V.A.L.	-	Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekhsangraha.
22. V.D.	-	Vaidya Daftar.

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CHAPTER I

Origin of the Bhonsles of Nagpur

Raghuji's ancestors. Parsoji Bhonsle- gets the title of Sena Sahib Subah. Shahu honours Parsoji's son Kanhoji Bhonsle- gets the title of Sena Sahib Subah. Kanhoji's treasonable activities rouse Shahu's wrath. Raghuji Bhonsle- son of Kanhoji's cousin Bimbaji- captures Kanhoji. Raghuji's early life - comes into lime light - appointed Sena Sahib Subah. 1-23

CHAPTER II

Raghuji's Rise to Power

Raghuji consolidates his power in Varhad- subdues obdurate sardars- Shujayat Khan etc. Friction between Raghuji and Kanhoji's son Rayaji- compromise between the two. Raghuji and Gond Rajas. The kingdom of Devgarh. Raghuji's conquests in Gondwana and other neighbouring territories- the conquest of Garha-Mandla, Defeat of Avaji Kavade. Intrigues of Raghuji Bhonsle. Peshwa Bajirao and Raghuji scramble for power. Raghuji's rapid successes in Gondwana- expansion of his power...24-50

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Raghuji's Southern Campaigns

Maratha expeditions in south. Nizam-ul-Mulk establishes his authority in Karnatak. Rise of Chanda Saheb. Shahu deputes

Raghuji Bhonsle and Fateh Singh to collect tribute from Karnatak and to protect Raja of Tanjore against Chanda Saheb. Raghuji and Fateh Singh come upon Arcot. Dost Ali falls fighting against the Marathas - his son Safdar Ali takes shelter at Vellore. Ladies and valuables of the Nawab sent to Pondicherry.

Secret pact between Raghuji and Safdar Ali. Raghuji beseiges Trichinipoly. Chanda Saheb's brother Bara Saheb falls fighting against the Marathas. Trichinipoly surrendered to Raghuji. Chanda Saheb and his son Abid Ali sent prisoners to Nagpur. Raghuji becomes prominent by the conquest of Trichinipoly. The question of the Subedari of Karnatak - Murar Rao Ghorpade appointed to the charge of Trichinipoly. Conflict between the Peshwa and Raghuji- gives opportunity to Nizam to undo the Maratha work in Karnatak - recaptures Trichinopoly from Raghuji. Chanda Saheb transferred to Satara. Raghuji and Babuji Naik sent to Karnatak. Muzaffar Jang and Anwaruddin rout Babuji Naik near Basawapattam. Sadashiv Rao sent to Karnatak- returns with success. Nizam-ul-Mulk dies. Chanda Saheb effects his escape from Satara- returns to Karnatak- fails to recapture Trichinopoly.

Raghuji's relations with the French. Raghuji reaches the gates of Pondicherry. Refusal by French Governor Dumas to pay tribute to Raghuji. Raghiji concludes an agreement with the French - returns to the Maratha capital.

Raghuji and the Nizam. Maratha claims against the Nizam. Maratha-Nizam war of 1751-52. Karnatak task remains unfinished. Nizam's defeat at Sindkhed. Raghuji ravages Nizam's territory-

his successful start - Nasir Jang routed. Treaty concluded at Singwa- fort Trimbak restored to Nizam.

Raghuji's role in southern campaigns. Marathas' get strong foothold in Karnatak- maintenance of Maratha-English friendship- Karnatak Hindus get religious freedom.

Effects of Raghuji's southern campaigns. Maratha prestige enhanced - financially fruitless for Raghuji - French commerce suffered - English trade effected - country ravaged and plundered - involvement of the French and the English in wars, from 1750-1760 - foreign powers increase their power and prestige in India - Court of Satara becomes a web of intrigues.

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CHAPTER IV

Raghuji's Bengal Invasions - 1741-1751

Causes of Bengal invasions. Aliwardi Khan- becomes the Nawab of Bengal. Mir Habib- appointed Deputy governor of Orissa. First Maratha incursion in 1742. Raghuji despatches Bhaskar Ram to Bengal - harasses the Nawab - gradually reduces Bengal. Marathas raid and plunder Murshidabad - capture Hooghly port. All West Bengal in Maratha occupation. Nawab surprises the Maratha camp at Katwa- province cleared of Marathas upto Chilka lake. Second Maratha incursion in 1744. Bhaskar Ram leaves Nagpur for Bengal - reaches Katwa. Peshwa deceives Aliwardi Khan - his helplessness. Massacre of Maratha generals at Mankera. Third Maratha invasion of 1745. Raghuji marches to Bengal to take revenge - captures most part of Orissa- sends Durlabhram prisoner to Nagpur.

Raghuji invades Bihar. Nawab seeks succour from the Emperor - Emperor commissions Peshwa to help Nawab in punishing Raghuji. Raghuji routed near Murshidabad - returns to Nagpur - carries his case against the Peshwa to Shahu - Shahu arbitrates - Bengal becomes the exclusive preserve of Raghuji.

Raghuji's policy and plans after the settlement. Mir Zafar defeats Maratha army at Midinapur. Janoji Bhonsle marches upon Bengal - Nawab campaigns against Janoji - defeat of Janoji. Santaji Bhonsle marches on to Bengal. Treaty signed in 1751. Aliwardi Khan makes peace with Raghuji- yields chauth of Bengal.

Raghuji and Peshwa try to take Bengal. Raghuji resents Peshwa's controlling authority. Estrangement between the Peshwa and Raghuji. Peshwa leaves Orchha for Bengal - clashes with Raghuji. Emperor takes side of Peshwa. Agreement between the Peshwa and Nawab to expel Raghuji from Bengal. Peshwas attempt to check Bhonsles. Raghuji and Peshwa clash together - Raghuji routed near Pachet - returns to Nagpur. Shahu reconciles Peshwa and Raghuji at Satara - agreement signed between the two - rivalry closed for the time being.

Effects of Bengal invasions - net gain for Raghuji - the province of Orissa and the imposition of chauthai over Bengal. Historic dispute between Raghuji and Peshwa arose- showed the condition of Maratha Raj. Peshwa gains many advantages. Unrest and confusion spread throughout Bengal - Raghuji's financial position becomes weak - frequent Maratha raids effect

Nawab's government - enormous loss of wealth and shrinkage of revenue - Emperor Muhammad Shah agrees to make peace with the Marathas - condition of people becomes pitiful- adversely effects their economic life - create terror among European traders in Bengal - effects their trade - periodic erruptions of Maratha force into Bengal make French establishment to live in a state of insecurity - Marathas requisit ship from Kogo Moga- a Dutch port - Plunder of goods and treasure of English factory - causes disunion and dissension within the Maratha empire. 123-159

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His relation with Raja Shahu, Ram Raja, Peshwa and Tarabai. Shahu's illness - Search for successor - a period of intrigues. Shahu dismisses Peshwa - calls Raghuji to take charge

of State affairs - Raghuji declines the offer. Shahu thinks of adopting Raghuji's son Mudhoji - drops the idea of his adoption. Raghuji's secret understanding with the Peshwa - not interested in Satara affairs. Intrigues of Tarabai. Ram Raja becomes Chhatrapati. Tarabai tries to win over Raghuji - he refuses to oblige her. Tarabai intrigues with Nizam against the Peshwa. Peshwa seeks Raghuji's help.

Ram Raja's struggle for power - tries to seek Raghuji's cooperation. Peshwa's opponents unsuccessful bid to create misunderstanding between Raghuji and the Peshwa. Peshwa gives Raghuji a Jagir in Berar - a reward for his friendship.

Peshwa leaves for Poona. Tarabai comes to Poona from Singhgad. Raghuji and Ram Raja arrive at Poona - a grand assemblage held - resolutions passed. Peshwa assumes more power. Poona becomes headquarter of Maratha Raj.

Raghuji's last days and the question of succession. Raghuji dies in 1755. Raghuji's eldest son Janoji takes his place. Mudhoji resents this - being the son of Raghuji's elder wife. Final decision - Janoji succeeds to the Nagpur state - gets the robes of Sena Sahib Subah. Raghuji's sons fail to keep Bhonsle standards high. 192-226

CHAPTER VII

Raghuji's Administration and His Institutions.

Central Government - a replica of Poona. Shahu sends experienced men with Raghuji. Feudatories. Provincial Government - appointment of Subedars and other offixials. Various

Institutions - Revenue System - collection of chauth, Sardeshmukhi, Ghasdana and levy of other taxes. Officials of the Revenue department. Land cultivation. Coinage- Law and Justice - perfunctory, indefinite, and uncertain. Panchayat system. Police - a large establishment of harkaras for obtaining information. Military system - Maratha Empire a military organisation. Cavalry - main strength of the army. Trade and commerce - secondary object with the Government. Postal system - no regular postal department. Education and communication. Religious and charitable grants. Institution of slavery.

Raghuji's administrative difficulties - unable to realise whole revenue - financially not well off - full of debts.

Raghuji's administration - an estimate. Interested in people's welfare - no policy of harassment. Raghuji's rule - an immense advance upon preceding system.

Bhonsle Kingdom comes under British rule - end of an era. 227-298

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CONCLUSION - RAGHUJI BHONSLE - AN ESTIMATE

A large number of capable leaders whether acting with or against Baji Rao constituted in no small measure to the history of the period, and they deserve some notice. One of them was Raghuji Bhonsle, the founder of the principality of Nagpur. The Bhonsles, like the Dabhades and the Angrias, began to resent the controlling authority exercised on them by the Peshwa as they were all direct creations of the Chhatrapati, and in no way indebted to the Peshwa for their position. To compare Raghuji with other Maratha Sardars like Shinde, Holkar, and others, would be to do an injustice to him, as they all were the creation of the Peshwa, and had the support of the Peshwa. But as Raghuji was different, he should be given an honourable place among these Maratha Sardars.(1)

Like Debhade, Gaikwad, and Angrey and others, Raghuji also opposed the Peshwa, but for a short while only, as he felt that it would be of no use for himself or for the Maratha Kingdom to oppose the Peshwa. The rivalry between the two could harm the state. Raghuji, however, knew his limitations and managed to restrain his jealousy not allowing it to provoke a rupture with Baji Rao. The

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1. Purandare Daftar- Vol. I, p.153.

two kept up an attitude of mutual respect and dignity, and often also cooperated in their undertakings. The long-standing rivalry between Raghuji and the Peshwa was abandoned for sometime by the efforts of Shahu in the year 1743 A.D. Although Babuji Naik, Tarabai, Dabhade, Damaji Gaikwad, and the Nizam all tried their best to provoke Raghuji against the Peshwa, yet he did not pay any heed to their pleas, and remained true to his own principle. He always kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds, and never turned a traitor to his mother country. It must be said to the credit of both that their relations never came to be appreciably strained during their life time.

In his effort at unifying the Maratha State, however, the Peshwa, with all his patience and diplomacy, found it hard to reduce to obedience the two incorrigible chiefs— the Bhonsles of Nagpur, and the Angrias of Colaba.

The part played by the Bhonsles of Nagpur was so conspicuous in Maratha history that they came in for a large share in the total Maratha conquests over a period of more than fifty years and this naturally accounts for the magnitude of their records. Raghuji was the first and the most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur, and from him was descended the race of the Rajas of Nagpur. From the period alluded to, they had usually acted as a branch of the Maratha confederacy, but had invariably maintained their independence, forming treaties, remaining neutral, or acting either with or against the Peshwa, as it suited their interest or their policy.

The members of the Bhonsle family of Nagpur were military

leaders, with the habits generated by that profession. They had never left the plain manners of their nation; they were connected by the ties of blood, and by constant familiar intercourse, with everyone of their principal officers. Being born in the class of cultivators, they had a hereditary respect for that order, though not restrained by it from every degree of cupidity and plunder, yet they were seldom cruel to lower classes and almost always paid attention to established power and institutions, with the restraints arising from such considerations, the Rajas of Nagpur were, in theory, as absolute as the Maratha Chiefs of Malwa in the internal government of their dominions.(2)

Raghuji started his career in 1728, and by sheer dint of personal valour, combined with extreme circumspection, he rose to a position of eminence from the humble position of a mere soldier and succeeded in carving out for himself an independent field for action in what is now known as Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. He was a self-made man. He had risen to the status of a first rate nobleman at the court of Shahu by the dint of his merit. He, therefore, believed that his status was on a par with that of the Peshwa for all practical purposes. He resented the Peshwa's interference in his sphere of influence. It may be observed that for this mutual jealousy neither the Peshwa nor Raghuji was so much at fault. The defect lay in the weaknesses of the central authority. In the absence of a strong centre, the Marathas were not able to create an effective confederacy which could enforce its authority over all.

Shahu undertook costly distant expeditions in the north, as

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2. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.64.

the south was closed to him. He engaged in his service such active and vigorous men as Peshwa BajiRao, Senapati Dabhade, Sindhia. Udaji Pawar, Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, Malharrao Holkar and many others, and gave free scope to their valour and statesmanship.

Raghuji had either to remain quiet without hope of ever extending his dominion, or forcibly to create a new kingdom in the north. Due to his keen observation, Raghuji found plenty of fighting material scattered all over the country. Several leaders of Maratha bands had made incursions into the distant parts of Malwa, Gujarat and Berar. They had ambition and capacity, and only needed a field for their activities. To check their ambitious spirit was out of question. The central authority wielded by Shahu was itself weaker than that of any of these Maratha leaders- as for instance Kanhoji Angria of Colaba, Kanhoji Bhonsle, Khanderao Dabhade or Chandra Sen Jadav, were each singly more than a match for the weak Shahu. The only remedy was to utilise them for a common purpose and give them a coherent shape, i.e. to create a field in which all could work out their own destiny, in extending Maratha power and influence according to the means and capacity which each possessed.

Shahu gave a free hand, an ample field for action to any and every person who approached him for patronage. Most of the historical families which figure so largely in Maratha history rose to prominence under the direct encouragement of Shahu. Under the Saranjami system of the succeeding period, there was plenty of scope for lucrative military service all over the country. The exaction of Chauth supplied the plausible excuse for Maratha bands to under-

take distant expeditions.(3)

The founders of the Houses of Nagpur, Akalkot, Dhar, Indore, Ujjain, Baroda and other places, were all young boys whose capacity and valour were first recognised and rewarded by Shahu. The Bhonsles of Nagpur, the Bhonsles of Akalkot, Gaikwad, Angrey, and the Sawant of Sawant-wadi, they all used to give Khandani to the central power and provided their army to the central power for help. Raghuji's position was recognised by this central power.

When BajiRao the first Peshwa usurped the supreme authority, Raghuji who was Commander-in-Chief of the forces, and who held the province of Berar in Jagir, proceeded to turn it into an independent government. As the Mohammedan historian informs us, "this man was the first who assumed independence from being a tax-gatherer."(4) It appears, however, that he continued to acknowledge the supremacy of the Raja of Satara and the authority of the office of the Peshwa as the civil executive authority of the state. Although he set up an independent kingdom but maintained close cooperation with King Shahu and the Peshwa.

Raghuji was independent by nature. He did not care either for the King Shahu or the Peshwa. He did what he liked. That is why he abstained from interfering in the affairs of the

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3. Maharashtra Itihas Manjari-edited by Dattaraya Vishnu Apte, pp.226-229.

4. Selections from the letters- Despatches and other state papers-preserved in the Bombay Secretariate-Maratha series-Vol.I,p.12, Edited by George W. Forrest.

Central Government. Although he had a great respect for King Shahu, and he never openly disobeyed him, he sometimes defied his authority. In the same way he kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds. He did not want to work under somebody else. For instance, Shahu had sent him along with Fateh Singh Bhonsle in the Karnatak expedition, but there he took all the powers in his own hands, disregarded Fateh Singh Bhonsle, and made attacks according to his own wishes. Shahu had ordered him to go to Bhopal with his troops for the help of the Peshwa against the Nizam, but he did not obey him, and began to attack the northern regions of India. His invasions of Bengal and Orissa are a proof of his independent nature. He carved out an independent field of action for himself. Later on his example was followed by other Sardars, such as Multanji Holkar, Ranoji Sindhia and Pilaji Gaikwad who became founders of Regal dynasties. All these began to make war and peace without his knowledge and approbation, and to use the troops not for the advantage of the empire, but for their own aggrandisement. In course of time each assumed independent authority, and, while they professed nominal obedience to the Peshwa, they stood in the same relation to him as the Peshwa stood in respect to the Raja of Satara. Raghuji made treaty with the Nizam, without the knowledge or permission of King Shahu or the Peshwa. Terms of negotiations were settled between Safdar Ali Khan and Raghuji without the knowledge of Fateh Singh. Even Ramaji Pant joined hands with Raghuji in this affair. So the Peshwa was asked to chastise Raghuji, and thus to teach him a good lesson for his independent conduct."(5).

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5. S.P.D., XX, 21.

Raghuji was an opportunist. Bold and decisive in action, he was the type of a Maratha leader who saw in the troubles of other states an opening for the fulfilment of his own ambition, and did not even require a pretext for plunder and invasion. Thrice his armies invaded Bengal. He obtained the cession of Cuttack; Chanda, Chhatisgarh and Sambalpur were added to his dominion between 1745 and 1755, the year of his death.

The end of Kanhoji Bhonsle's political career in about 1730 A.D. opened up for Raghuji new opportunities in Berar, Nagpur and the region beyond to the east. Raghuji was not the man to lose such opportunities. He took full advantage of expanding his own independent kingdom. Raghuji distinguished himself as a capable soldier in Karnatak. His leadership and tact in the Karnatak campaign enhanced his prestige at the court of Shahu. The Marathas got a strong foot hold in Karnatak due to him. Pleased with his exploits Shahu conferred upon him, the Mokasa of Berar and Gondwana upto the frontiers of Katak, and appointed him Sena Sahib Subah in place of his uncle, the disobedient Kanhoji Bhonsle. The Karnatak campaign gave Raghuji eminence at the court of Satara, and eventually in the Maratha confederacy. It helped him in giving a status on par with the Peshwa. In fact his Karnatak success was very brilliant.

In Shahu's time there was a basic conflict about the expansion of Maratha Empire- whether to expand it in north or in south. As the south was closed for Shahu, the Peshwa was in the favour of expansion in the north. That is why the Peshwa had left the campaign of the south incomplete, and the Nizam took advantage of that situation. Now the task of finishing this unfinished work came

upon the shoulders of Raghuji. He took up the challenge and showed his military genius in his Karnatak campaign. He was wholly successful in his invasions of Karnatak. By a single stroke he defeated Chanda Saheb and Safdar Ali. This was his masterly expedition in southern most of India, where he hoisted the flag of Maratha kingdom, expanded its limits, and established the authority of the Marathas in India as the supreme power.(6) This proves his military genius. As the Peshwa had been successful in the north by defeating the Mughal Emperor and the Nizam at Bhopal, and in taking them into his own field, Raghuji was successful in the south by defeating the Nawabs of Arcot and Trichinopoly. But the expeditions towards south were more powerful, accurate, and full of war tactics. They were far superior and they established the authority and power of Raghuji in the Maratha Kingdom. He never lost ground there and thus he became an object of jealousy for the Peshwa. Trichinopoly was lost due to Babuji Naik and the jealousy of the Peshwa towards Raghuji and not due to his follies.

In the 18th century the Maratha power extended right upto the southern most part of the peninsula. The Maratha Governors actually held their sway over Trichinopoly and Madura. In 1741, Murar Rao Ghorpade was the governor of Trichinopoly and Appaji Rao held the governorship of Madura. This shows that the Maratha power, though centred at Poona, had its branches reaching far and wide. This was all due to Raghuji, whose main ambition appears to have

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6. S.P.D.XX, 21 and 22; Rajwade, op.cit., Vol.VI, 149; Aitihasik Patravayarahar, No.26.

been to thwart the Peshwa.

The only effective opposition to the establishment of his power came from the direction of Chanda Saheb, and to check his power and keep it in effective bounds became the watch word of his policy. He directed his energy towards preventing his expansionist activities by repudiating his claims to the revenue of the province under his command. He understodd too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long, protracted struggle with him. In spite of being separated from the heart of the Empire by a long distance, Karnatak province offered great possibilities to an ambitious man like Raghuji, and he was not slow to perceive them. His greatest act of bravery was the conquest of Trichinopoly and making Chanda Saheb a prisoner. Raghuji pursued the policy of southward drive so vigorously that it soon brought the Marathas to the gates of Pondicherry and for sometime made them the ruler of the Deccan. He had established beyond challenge the Maratha supremacy in the Deccan. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, Chanda Saheb, and Safdar Ali, who had attempted to follow a strong policy, failed miserably, and Chanda Saheb found himself in captivity of Raghuji, and he came to an understanding with his erstwhile enemy, by not only surrendering the whole of the territory belonging to him, but also by granting Raghuji's claim to Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the revenues of his province. His Karnatak raids were daring in conception and brilliant in execution. This was the greatest success the Maratha arms had ever achieved since the beginning of the Karnatak campaigns in 1725. According to Sardesai, "In the Treaty of Sangola, 1752, the role of Raghuji was very constructive."(7)

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7. Sardesai,G.S. op.cit., Vol.II, p.290.

It was due to his successes in the south that Mir Habib, the Dewan of Murshid Quli Khan, invited the Dewan of Raghuji, Bhaskar Pant, to attack the Katak province, an invitation which he accepted . Thus Raghuji got another opportunity for ipterfering in the matters of Orissa and Bengal also.

Raghuji was not slow to understand the power of the French. Weighing things in his mind, Raghuji might have preferred an honourable retreat to a futile attack. It is not proper to say that he retreated from Pondicherry on account of the French wine. This shows his wisdom and foresightedness. In spite of his promises to the French, Raghuji did not turn a traitor. As none of the Maratha chiefs helped the French in fighting an outside enemy, Raghuji offered his apology to Bussy in these words- "I can give you several reasons to support my conduct, but I shall content myself with giving you only one, viz. that I am a servant of the house of Shahu Raja for three generations, I could not help obeying the orders of Tarabai, who asked me to support Balajirao."(8) Mainly due to the attitude and policy adopted by Raghuji towards the French, the relations between the two remained amicable to the end. The French did not derive any benefit from the Franco-Maratha friendship. Pondicherry was restored to the French in 1697 by the Treaty of Ryswick in Europe. But although the French recovered Pondicherry, the Karnatak had changed hands. With the fall of Jinji, the whole province came under the Mughal domination. The contact with the Marathas, which was lost for a period of 47 years, was resumed in the year 1740, and the Marathas were once more destined to

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8. Hatalkar, V.G.; Relations between the French and the Marathas, p.95.

play an important part in routing out the French from India. This is all due to Raghuji who wanted to expand the Maratha kingdom in the east and the south of India.

The French also did not dare to interfere in the affairs of Raghuji, keeping in view the situation prevailing there at that time. Raghuji also laid down a compromising policy with the French Governor Dumas at Pondicherry. The charge levied by Shahu against Raghuji, that he lost the Maratha Kingdom because of the French wine, was baseless. The Maratha kingdom was not lost due to it. By his policy he kept the French power away from interfering in the Deccan politics. Chanda Saheb did not get the help of the French during the Maratha invasion, as it had been agreed upon, and thus he was defeated. It was Raghuji's foresightedness that he kept a compromising attitude with the French, as they might not give help to his enemies in the south.

After the raids of the Karnatak, Raghuji commenced a series of expeditions to Bengal, which terminated after a contest of ten years in the acquisition by the Marathas of Cuttack, and the promise of twelve lakh of rupees from the Nawab Aliwardi Khan as the Chauth of Bengal and Bihar. His greatest achievement was the establishment of authority over Bengal and Bihar. ~~His greatest achievement was the conquest of Bengal and Orissa.~~ When Shahu allowed Raghuji to extend his sway as far as Bengal, and collect Chauthai, he had not actually obtained a royal farman from Delhi to that effect. This shows his practical attitude in achieving his aims.

From the year 1750 A.D., the English and the French began

to take an active part in the Indian politics. But none of the Indian powers dared to oppose them openly. Even the Peshwa also did not involve himself in the struggle for ascendancy between the French and the English in India. But Raghuji, experiencing many difficulties, conquered the province of Orissa, and imposed Chauthai upon Bengal and Bihar, and this was not an insignificant or an ordinary job. As Peshwa, Shinde and Holkar had established their rule over Malwa and Delhi, so Raghuji had established his rule over these provinces, and, by his valour, he finished up the authority of the Mughals in these provinces at least for ten years. He gave employment to thousands of people there. All this shows his ability and capacity to work. But due to the weakness of his sons, the English took advantage and they took the Diwani of Bengal into their own hands, and finished the claims of Chauthai of the Bhonsles.

The Treaty with the Nawab of Bengal was a complete triumph for Maratha diplomacy. The 18th Century witnessed a change of the first magnitude in the political aspect of India, the transfer of Supreme authority from the Mughal rulers to the Marathas. This payment of Chauth was an acknowledgement by the Nawab of his defeat, of his inability to hold his own against the Marathas.

The Marathas entered the northern provinces of the empire in the first half of the 18th century. In Raghuji the policy of north-eastward expansion found its most fearless champion. He realised full well the weakness of the empire, the levity of its rulers, the incompetence and corruption of its officers; and made a bid for the conquest of this region and for imposing the Chauthai.

His Bengal campaigns were, however, not so brilliant and precise as that of the Karnatak..

Due to the rise of the English power in Bengal, the aim of Raghuji was not the territorial conquest of Bengal, but only to impose Chauthai there. That is why the English began to take interest in the affairs of the Bhonsles of Nagpur and ultimately in 1803, the Bhonsles were subdued by the English. On the other hand the English could not consolidate their power in Orissa, when it was under the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

As an opportunist in Bengal also, he sought the cooperation of the rebellious Afghans against the Nawab of Bengal. "When the mutinous Afghans sought the help of Raghuji against the Nawab of Bengal-Aliwardi Khan, Raghuji finding his advantage in attaching to his person and cause some thousand Afghans, all old soldiers, equipped at all points, set out for Birbhum.(9)

The campaigns of Bengal, though they had been concluded to the advantage of the Marathas, were financially not a success. They had added to the huge debt Raghuji had already contracted and he had to find new fields for conquests liquidating his debts. His Bengal atrocities are being exaggerated. The relations between Bengal and the Marathas were old. The misfortune of the nation was that the Peshwa and Raghuji were at cross purposes with each other at Bengal. The Peshwa should also be blamed for Bengal invasions and its failure.

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9. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.7.

Raghuji not only made his name in the conquest of Bengal, but he also exhibited great heroism in bringing uncivilised Gond kingdoms of the erstwhile Central Province under Maratha subjugation, consolidating them, and creating a Nagpur State as a distinct entity in which he stands quite on par with Malharrao Holkar, and any of the Sindhias. He colonized Nagpur and other cities with Maharashtra elements and made his state a strong and wealthy base by training a large band of devoted co-workers in war and diplomacy. He established himself in Nagpur, where he reigned nominally as the representative of the Gond prince from 1743 to 1755. By 1751, he had effected the conquest of the Devgarh territories, Chhatisgarh, Ratanpur, the capital of Haihaivanshi kingdom, capitulated without a blow in 1741 on the advance of Maratha General, Bhaskar Pant, four years afterwards, with the deposition of the last Raja, a Rajput dynasty ended. The fort of Chanda was delivered to Raghuji by the treachery of a Dewan in 1749 and two years later it was finally ceded to him. He quietly extended the conquest which had been made by his cousin and subdued several of the princes whose territories bordered on his government, but it was because of the disunion which occurred in the Devgarh Raja's family that he was enable to lay the foundation of a principality for himself, which gradually increased until it included within its limits the greater part of Berar. A considerable part of the Nagpur territory is supposed to have once belonged to the Gond Chiefs. Devgarh and Chanda formed the nucleus, as it were, of the Bhonsle dominion. The rights originally exercised by the Marathas in those provinces were acquired by treaty; and though the Chief of Chanda was soon reduced to the situation of

a mere prisoner, both in name and reality, the Devgarh prince preserved his nominal superiority over the Maratha masters of his country, and his officers were associated in most of the acts of governments relating to the revenue. Burhanshah, the Gond Raja, though allowed to retain the outward insignia of royalty, became practically a state prisoner, and all real power passed to the Marathas, as in the case of disputes in the Gond Kingdom. Raghuji took complete advantage of the dissensions when they occurred between the brothers.

Raghuji's territory included the area from Berar to Cuttack. The Gond Kingdoms of Garha-Mandala, Chanda or Chandrapur and Devgarh were in his possession. Berar proper was under the dual authority of the Bhonsles and the Nizam. The strategic forts of Gawilgarh and Narnala with the territory attached to them were actually exclusively under Raghuji's possession. The fort of Manikdurg in the Mahur area belonged to him. The states of Chhatisgarh were also under his sway as important outposts between Nagpur and the province of Cuttack. He was the real founder of the Nagpur state. He established the kingdoms of Nagpur and Berar on firm foundations. The importance of his position as such has always been recognised in local history. Thus, before his death, Raghuji the Great had laid the foundation of a territorial state, nominally subordinate to the Head of the Maratha Empire, which comprised the following areas:-

(a) The former Raj Gond states of Devgarh and Chanda with their dependencies.

(b) The former Rajput states of Chhatisgarh (Raipur and

Ratanpur) with their dependencies.

(c) The Rajput state of Sambalpur with its dependencies; and

(d) The Mughal province of Orissa with its dependencies.†

The acquisition of this vast territory speaks for Raghuji generalship. Over this wide tract of country he asserted an exclusive right to the collection of the revenue. From Bengal and Bihar, he claimed an annual payment of twelve lakh of rupees by way of Chauth. In Berar he claimed the right to share the revenue with the Nizam under the curious system of do-amli, besides appropriating to himself the fortresses of Gawilgarh, Narnala and Manikdurg with the districts immediately dependent on them. He might have lost a few battles but he always won the war.

In diplomacy he was second to none. By his mounting success he won the confidence of Shahu and on critical occasions he was consulted by him. Shahu, prior to his death, had called Raghuji to Satara to discuss the matter of succession to the Chhatrapati's throne.

Nor did Raghuji's successes end here. On the death of King Shahu in 1749, he was summoned to Satara where, as the leader of the Maratha Sardars, his attitude had a decisive influence on the course of events. His personal ambition was now controlled by the caution of age and the admonition of experience, and in spite of the fact that Shahu's adoption of Raghuji's son Mudhoji, which had been strongly convassed, was negatived by the dramatic discovery of a direct heir of Shivaji, in the person of Ram Raja, a son of Shivaji II, Balaji Peshwa secured Raghuji's support in his favour.

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† SEE MAP ON PAGE, 314 A.

Raghuji approved of Ram Raja's succession to the titular sovereignty, escorted him to Poona and received in return from his complainsance new Sanads for Berar, Gondwana and Bengal.

Raghuji and the Peshwa were not always on good terms with each other. Raghuji always avoided an open clash with Baji Rao knowing well his ability as also the influence he wielded over the Chhatrapati. On the other hand Raghuji's valour kept the Peshwa alert and the clever Peshwa also knew the power of Raghuji, so he was always careful to keep a compromising attitude with Raghuji and acting on the advice of his brother Chimnaji Appa, the Peshwa settled his differences with Raghuji amicably. But actually neither Baji Rao nor his son Balaji was able to command the services of Raghuji in their capacity as the Peshwa or Prime Minister. So long as Shahu was alive such differences were not allowed to take a serious turn. After Shahu's death Raghuji respected the Peshwa's authority. He did not join the Peshwa's opponents in the Maratha confederacy, being convinced that he was the ablest man among the Marathas to occupy the Peshwaship.

Due to the strained relationship between Raghuji and the Peshwa, the latter also doubted the sincerity of Raghuji, as in one of his letters to Ram Chandra Baba he writes, "Raghuji entered into Mahar division. He came from Berar. His desire is to collect Ghasdana tax from our territory. This intention of Raghuji is being conveyed to me by different Mahal officers. Raghuji writes big letters showing regards and expresses brotherly feeling. But this is not true. He is a pretender and you known this. We should also

write him affectionate letters.(10)" Shrewd and alert as both the Peshwa and Raghuji were, they fully realised the advantage of preserving amity with each other and of fully cooperating in measures of mutual benefit. He adroitly avoided an open rupture with the Peshwa. As Baji Rao wrote to Chimnaji Appa. "Raghuji is very bold and wise. We have to control him, because he had defeated Avaji Kavade. But this is no time to displease him, as Nadirshah is going to attack our country. So we have to take Raghuji into our confidence, and should cooperate with him, instead of passing strictures against him."(11)

When Raghuji found that Karnatak was not a congenial field for his ambitious designs, he transferred his activities to the north, and north-east, where in 1742, he precipitated an open conflict with the new Peshwa Balajirao, a conflict which, unlike that of the Dabhade ten years before, happily had no tragic consequences. It was eventually adjusted at Satara by Raja Shahu in the autumn of 1743. Thereafter, the two prominent figures, Raghuji and the Peshwa though often mutually jealous and plunged into intrigues against one another, managed nevertheless to avoid an open clash, and often actually joined hands in furthering the extension and prestige of the Maratha Raj. This proves that Raghuji had a compromising attitude for settling the matters amicably.

Indeed, the fact that Shahu's death passed off without a bloody revolution is mainly due to the good sense of Raghuji, who,

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10. Kavyaitihas Sangraha No.59.
11. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, p.334.

though repeatedly urged by the King to visit him on his death bed, managed to postpone his arrival at Satara till after his master's death and until the succession of Ram Raja had been finally settled. Having clearly grasped the position of affairs at that critical juncture, and having been convinced that the Peshwa alone was capable of handling the critical situation to the best advantage, Raghuji gave the latter his whole-hearted support, in spite of the pressure brought to bear upon him from influential quarters. Had Raghuji joined the intrigues of Tarabai and Damaji Gaikwad, the odd would probably have been too strong for the Peshwa to cope with and would possibly have launched the kingdom upon a disastrous civil war. This phase of Raghuji's character is disclosed in numerous papers belonging to those times.

Raghuji knew well when to oppose and when to yield to his opponents. He was not prepared to allow matters to be carried to the breaking point un-necessarily. In one of his letters to Nana Peshwa, he writes, "the late Shrimant Bajirao was kind to me. But difference arose when we had a clash with Avaji Kavde who had entered Berar. All these matters should now be forgotten and I should be treated as your man."(12) Peshwa on learning the news of the death of Raghuji, wrote,- "Raghuji was a respectable nobleman. His death indeed a matter of great regret. Of late Raghuji was of much help to us."(13)

Raghuji was not the man to submit either to threats or to

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12. S.P.D. XX, p.30.

13. Ibid., p.68.

hostilities. Even Tarabai appealed to the Maratha blood of Raghuji and Fateh Singh Bhonsle to save the state from Brahman domination but none of them listened to her as the Peshwa had already taken them into his confidence and they were whole heartedly supporting his policy. Tarabai kept up to the last secret political relations with all the leading Maratha Sardars such as Raghuji Bhonsle, Fateh Singh Bhonsle, the Angre brothers, the Gaikwads, and the Dabhades.(14) All this shows the importance of Raghuji in the Maratha Court. He was occasionally consulted on all important matters of state, and was sent on war expeditions to distant places in the land. His presence and policies kept the Peshwa alert, so the Peshwa also adopted an attitude of compromise towards Raghuji, and did not oppose him openly. During the last years of his life his relations with the Peshwa and King Ram Raja were very cordial. The Peshwa also showed his full confidence in him. The clever Raghuji knew the weaknesses of Tarabai, and he was always careful to keep her in good humour by fluttering her vanity by outward submission. He never opposed openly the plans and policies of Tarabai, but he also did not submit to her intrigues and unworthy party politics. This is also another proof of his independent nature.

Raghuji was not slow to grasp the political situation prevailing in the area from the distant Karnatak to Gondwana, and he finally threw his lot with Shahu, who was by then a well-settled Chhatrapati. This was indeed a wise decision which benefitted Raghuji, as also the Maratha expansion.

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14. S.P.D.VI, 211 and 213.

The Nizam got the support of the English and the French. They did influence the politics of those times and played a prominent part in bringing out the ups and downs of the Indian rulers and powers. They, however, did not help the Marathas, but helped their opponents. In spite of these odds, Raghuji was successful in establishing the Maratha authority in the far off south-east region of India, which was lost due to the jealousy of the Peshwa for him.

Many people think and opine that owing to the ambitions of Raghuji, the Peshwa with the intention of keeping him away from his own sphere of activity in the north, had shown him the way of activity to fulfil his ambition in the eastern coast of Bengal and Karnatak, and in this way he directed the ambitious activities of one of his rivals to another side of India. Raghuji also wanted to get the robes of Peshwaship after the death of Baji Rao I, and the throne of the Maratha kingdom after the death of the issuless King Shahu. That is why the Peshwa tried his best to keep Raghuji away from his own path of victory and influence. If Shahu and the Peshwa would have guided him properly and would have shared his troubles and responsibilities, Raghuji would have been able to achieve far greater results in his plans and policies than he was actually able to.

Raghuji was also a very troublesome Sardar of Shahu. He disobeyed the King Shahu and harassed him like anything in paying to him the annual tribute,(15) but still the King used to praise

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15. Shejwalkar, T.S.- Nagpur Affairs, Vol.I, p.193.

him.(16) He broke his relation from the Maratha Mandal and created his own independent kingdom.(17) 'Both Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, were brave and powerful and had the courage to oppose the King or the Peshwa, but Kanhoji Bhonsle was an eccentric, and Raghuji was very shrewd and politically wise. Kanhoji was a total failure but Raghuji became very famous. He extended the territories of the Maratha Raj. Ranoji had entrusted all his work to Raghuji.(18)

Raghuji was a personal favourite of King Shahu. He used all his influence with the King to prevent the nomination of Bajirao's son Balaji as the first minister. The King, however, was wise enough to see that for all his skill as a hunter and his courage as a soldier, Raghuji was unfit to be the Peshwa.

Raghuji had pretensions (founded on his descent) to the state of Satara, favoured the eventual accomplishment of those pretensions, but the dread of the superior power of the Peshwa prevented him from fulfilling those pretensions. Under these circumstances it cannot be supposed that the Raja of Berar considered himself to be subordinate to the Peshwa, although it was in his interest to act with him on important occasions, as a member of that empire of which the Peshwa was the executive civil authority. On those occasions when they met, the Raja of Berar was treated (in consequence of his

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16. Purandare Daftar-Vol.I, No.140.
17. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat, p.335.
18. Shejwalkar, op.cit., p.125 ; Sardesai, op.cit., p.374.

descent) as superior in rank, and, in his capacity as the first constituent member of the empire, claimed the right of sending to the Peshwa an address of honour on his accession to office.(19)

Hastings on July 9, 1778, paid his tribute to Raghuji in these words:- "Mudhoji Bhonsle's family has always borne a considerable rank among the powers of India. His father Raghuji subjected the provinces of Bengal to the Chauth under the government of the most able chief that ever ruled them."

The rise of the Nagpur kingdom did not take up in the time of Great Shivaji. When Shahu came to Maharashtra after his release from the Mughal Camp, Bhonsles did help him in making his position strong. Thence the Bhonsles of Nagpur became part and parcel of the Maratha Raj. Due to the ambitious and powerful Raghuji, the power of this house began to grow, and many parts of eastern and southern regions of India came under his sway.(20)

Forrester gives an account of Nagpur State in these words, "The revenue of Nagpur were computed at a crore of rupees in the time of Raghuji, who being at the head of a large army and generally in the field, collected a tribute from all the territories intervening between his capital and Bengal".(21) Later on it yielded only 59 lakhs. The military reputation of the Nagpur House was at its highest during Raghuji's reign.

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19. Extracted from pp. 256-257 of Bengal Papers relative to the Maratha war of 1803 printed in order of the House of Commons 5th and 22nd.June, 1804.
20. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol. VI, p.167.
21. Rennell-Memoire of a map of Hindustan, p.cxxix-cxxxi.

Raghuji should receive the major portion of the credit for the prosperity of Nagpur. He brought along with him a number of Maratha and Brahman families from western Maharashtra, who infused new order and life in the administration of Nagpur and Berar. Cultivation in and around Nagpur improved under Raghuji. A number of Kumbi or cultivators' families settled in the territory under Raghuji. The credit for settling the weavers of Kost also goes to Raghuji.

The Maratha rule in the Nagpur territories constituted for the mass of the people an immense advance upon the system of government, which had preceded it. Before the Marathas came, the country was divided into a number of petty semi-indigenous principalities. Each of these was again subdivided into big and small chiefships. The states themselves were frequently at war and were always at enemity with each other, and every bigger and smaller chief was ready, as soon as external control was relaxed, to break out into hostilities with his neighbours. There could have been under such a system but slender security for life and property and but little encouragement for either trade or agriculture. But under the sway of the Bhonsles, "the country is said much to have improved and to have received a great increase of population."(22) Jenkins's verdict that the advent of Marathas "no doubt accelerated the general prosperity", may be accepted as authoritative.(23)

With Raghuji the Great, the great days of the Nagpur have had in fact departed. Just as the Mughal Empire attained its greatest

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22. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.106.

23. Ibid., p.75.

strength and almost its maximum extension in the life of Akbar the Great, so the Nagpur state reached the zenith of its political and military reputation under Raghuji. His vigorous personality consolidated the kingdom, and drew from it a revenue which his sons Janoji and Mudhoji could never raise. The power of the Nagpur State began to decline under Janoji. Raghuji admitted no partner to his territorial control, while his successors were hampered by the semi-independent status which custom conferred on their near-relations in important appanges such as Chanda and Chhatisgarh.

His four sons could not keep up the reputation of the Nagpur House. After his death, dissension arose between his four sons and none could look after the vast empire left by him. The difference between the two Bhonsle brothers weakened their power. Nagpur, after the death of Raghuji, became a hot bed of political intrigues. Many courtiers exploited the family faction for their selfish ends. The two brothers were finally reconciled to each other, because Janoji, who was without a son, decided to adopt Mudhoji's son as his successor. The credit for this amity, however, goes to the situation than to the wisdom of either of the brothers. The Peshwa had used both his effection and good offices in solving their internal dispute, but with no result. Their wisdom and valour was of no use to the state.(24)

The Maratha States were never content to be self supporting, and Raghuji's greatness really vested on his far-flung military expeditions. A leader who carried his arms to Allahabad in the north,

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24. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol.VI, p.167.

to Madras in the south, and to Bengal in the east was a man worth following. Thus his activities were not confined to the Nagpur state only, but spread to a far greater area of this country. His vigour in the field brought him wealth, made his services popular, and won for him a great reputation.

Like Bajirao I, Raghuji too was loved by his followers. He had capable and trustworthy persons like Bhaskar Pant, Raghuji Karande, Tuloji Pant, Naroji Jachak, Rakhmaji Ganesh, Krishnaji Atole, and others as his adherants. Baburao Konher Kolhatkar was his intimate adviser, who cooperated with Janoji; Raghuji's ablest son, in transacting current business pertaining to his rule of Nagpur. The leniency with which he treated the Gond Raja deserves particular mention, as it shows a trait of humanity in the Marathas worthy of highest pitch of civilization. He not only abstained from all sorts of personal violence, but allotted three lakh of rupees annually for the Gond Raja's maintenance and the fort for him to live in by no means as under confinement. He suitably rewarded the person who rendered help to him. As this narration illustrates, "The country from Dongertaul to this village (Luckna-down) an extent of 71 miles is held in Jagner by Mohammad Ummekhan, a Pitan Chief, to whose father the great Raghoji, the first granted it in reward for services during his reduction of the Gondwana and the northern part of Berar." (25) Raghuji had the real ability and strong character which distinguished Baji Rao the Peshwa, or even Jaswant Rao Holkar. But after him none of the Bhonsles had possessed those qualities.

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25. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.77.

Raghuji had the twin qualities for success in politics and diplomacy-cunningness and treachery. Appaji had complained to the Peshwa that he was harrassed by Raghuji when he was left to manage the affairs of the Peshwa's estate in his absence and complained that these were not relieved by his master.(26) Sometimes he used to behave in a very peculiar way. Keso Krishna Shambekar had written to Vishwanath Bhat that he could not enjoy the Mamlat of Akot due to the queer nature of the Bhonsle. In Berar there was famine on account of want of rain, and so there was no sowing of Rabi crop. But still he had to pay Rs. 30,000 for that year's Rasad to Raghuji, and Rs.1,000 to Mudhoji and Rs.11,000 for miscellaneous expenses. Beside this Krishnaji Govind and Raghuji Karande and other concerned persons had gathered together at Akot to receive the Ghasdana amount. Raghuji did not grant any concession in realising the dues, to Shambekar for all these natural calamities.(27) His attitude was also very defiant which set at naught the authority of the Peshwa, and of Fateh Singh Bhonsle. The Peshwa was informed about the movements of Raghuji and his independent dealings with the Nawab Safdar Ali Khan.

Raghuji was a little but selfish by nature. He welcomed the news of Chimnaji's death, because he was relieved of the check on his activities. He made himself the master of the situation and realised large amounts of money from the Nawab Safdar Ali by promising him help when the latter would be in difficulty. He even instigated

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26. S.P.D.,XX, 6.

27. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.26 of 29.10.1752.

the Nawab of Arcot, who began to give evasive replies to the Peshwas demands of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi; and evaded the payment of all these dues.(28) He could not trust everybody. Nobody could know his whereabouts when marching with his troops. Raghuji marched towards north without divulging the place of his destination.(29)

His financial position was always very bad. He was always full of debt. He could not return the money to those from whom he had borrowed. Therefore, he was harassed by his creditors. Only Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya got his account settled. To fill up his empty treasury, he used to realise money by fair means or foul. He demanded a ransom of three lakh of rupees for Jankiram's son's release, and illegally recovered the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages.(30) For this action of his, Shahu had to issue a strict warning to the agent of Raghuji, against recovering the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages. Sometimes Shahu had to take strict action against the aggressive attitude of Raghuji.(31) Thus Raghuji used to adopt an aggressive attitude, whenever such an opportunity would arise. He was a political genius-an expert in war tactics, administration and diplomacy. In diplomacy he was second to none; only Santaji Ghorpade could come on par with him in war tactics. In diplomacy it would appear that Nana Saheb Peshwa was far superior to Raghuji, but in establishing a separate kingdom, there was none other

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28. S.P.D. XXVIII, 9 and 10.
29. Ibid., XX, 42.
30. Ibid., XX, 6 and 46; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1946.
31. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1746.

than Raghuji. He was the leader of those who opposed the plans and policies of the Peshwa. The Peshwas rose due to their family background, but the glory of Raghuji rests on his own valour and efforts. His best kingdom speaks of his glory during the Peshwa's time. He was first of all a very good soldier, and he had faith in his troops. It is said, "Raghuji did not keep a single pie with him. All money he used to spend on his soldiers with their advice. He never uttered a single word when he was short of money. He used to say, "that is right which God wills." He was not a luxury-loving person. He did not want to rest or relax and used to take his food on the horse back when riding on it."(32) This shows his sense of duty and large heartedness.

Besides being a very good soldier, he was a very intelligent man, courageous and active. He kept himself well informed and was occasionally consulted by others in all important matters of the state. He was also a very good hunter and a bold horseman. King Shahu was also very fond of hunting. Therefore, he used to take Raghuji along with him in his hunting expeditions. Once he saved the life of Shahu from the claws of a tiger. Therefore, Shahu was pleased with Raghuji and he in turn took advantage of Shahu's favour.

He was not an anti-Brahmin. Duff has charged him, with being jealous of the Peshwas due to the Brahmin ascendancy. But this seems to be wrong. He had many trustworthy Brahmin Sardars like Tuljoram, Bhaskarram Kolhatkar, Shivaji Keshav Talkute, and politicians

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32. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.38.

like Konherram Kolhatkar, Vyankoji, Ragho Ballal, and Raghunath Bhat Jhipre Patwardhan, etc., who had worked with him. There is a letter which shows how Raghuji helped the Brahmins of Mehkar. They had complained to Raghuji that they were harassed by his troops. Thereupon, Raghuji gave them a letter of assurance that in future they would not be harassed in any way.(33) This is a proof that he was not anti-Brahman, but had sympathy with every class of people, and there were no caste feelings in him. Mamaji Tembrekar of Nagpur, who is very rarely mentioned in other papers wrote to Vishwanath Bhat about the relations between the members of the Bhonsle family and that of Raghuji Karande. They, he said, "were against the brahmins, and wanted to get rid of them."(34) This casting of blame by Mamaji Tembrekar seems to be incorrect.

According to the tradition, and customs of those times, Raghuji had also six wives and seven concubines. Out of these thirteen women, six became satis after his death.(35) Besides his four legitimate sons, he had an illegitimate son also, named Mohan Singh. (36) The Subah of Chhatisgarh was given to Mohan Singh. Perhaps he had a weakness for the fair sex. Once he was attracted towards two daughters of a bangle-seller of Nagpur. He ordered that those two girls should be brought to his Darbar. Hearing this the bangle seller became very furious, and refused to send his daughters to him. Upon this Raghuji ordered that the bangle seller's house be plundered and he be brought before him.(37) In fact his private life

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33. Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.I,No.35.
34. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.27, of 3.11.1952.
35. S.P.D. XX,79 and 80; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.60.
36. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.30 of August, 1746.
37. S.P.D.XX, 34. This letter throws valuable light on Raghuji's character and his ways of doing things.

was influenced by the customs of those times. Even two years Before his death, he had intended to marry the daughter of Deoji Shirke, but due to certain reasons the marriage was postponed.(38) In 1748, Raghuji had the plan of marrying again at the time of the marriage of his daughter.(39)

He was very pious by nature. He was an ardent devotee of Ram, although his family deity was Shankar. He installed the idol of Ram at Ramtek and revived the importance of this place of epic fame. On his letter head, he used to write 'Sitakanta'. He used to pay due respect to the sadhus and saints, as also to Ramdasi Devbaba of Bhandara and to Pirasha Muslim Saint. This shows that he had no communal feelings in his heart of hearts. He made land grants to many temples and holy places. When Raghuji was in Karnatak, there a sadhu gave him the idol of Ramchandra as a Prasad and asked him to worship that idol, and said that he would be benefitted. Shahu also permitted him to use the flag of God Ramchandra. He gave him the Bhagwan flag and Jari Patka as his flag. From that time the Jari Patka and the saffron coloured flag became the emblems of Raghuji's army. (40) He respected the family of Ramaji Pant Kolhatkar till the end of his life, because he had taught him the worship of Ram.

Raghuji was also interested in building towns etc. "He was the founder of the city of Nagpur, which he surrounded with a rampart,

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38. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.4 of 13.5.1753.
39. Ibid., No.20 of 506.1748.
40. Nagpur Kagadpatra, essay No.8; Aitihasik Patravyavahar,No.7.

formerly it was only an insignificant village, appertaining to the fort prior to his capture of it. It is situated on a fine high plain which is richly cultivated and produces fine wheat and bounded by hills to the north-west and south. The Nag river, a rivulet running to the southward, gives name to the town. The houses are generally neatly built and covered with files, the streets are narrow and filthy."(41) He made Nagpur his ihdependent place of living,but still he did not leave the side of the Peshwa. The essentially Maratha character of the town of Nagpur, which was in many respects a prominent rival to Satara, indicated that Raghuji and his co-adjustors took incessant pains to transfer to that place a fresh stock of Deccan people of all classes and to colonise with them the north-eastern regions of central India, in order to bring them under a refining influence. After conquering the Gond kingdoms he made Nagpur a grand capital of his kingdom. He contributed greatly to its political, social and cultural life. His successor Janoji took part in the wars between the Peshwa and the Nizam. But later on he had in turn betrayed both of them, contrary to the policy of his father. Consequently the Peshwa and the Nizam, both of them united against him and sacked and burnt Nagpur in 1765. Amraoti town is said to have been founded by Raghuji. At one time there was a representative of the Nizam, as well as one of the Bhonsle, at the place. Bhonsle used to receive 60 p.c. and the Nizam 40 p.c. of the revenue.(42)

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41. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.72.
42. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, p.157.

Raghuji, with good taste selected a site, Wun-Bham, for his residence. It was at this place that Raghuji had, it is said, a divine information of the bright future that lay before him, that of rising to regal power, and it was from this place that he had fled on one horse to Devgarh to escape assassination by Kanhoji and his son Rayaji.(43)

In the long and distinguished galaxy of Maratha Chiefs, Raghuji Bhonsle was unequalled for the doings and originality of his genius and value of his achievements. The story of Raghuji deals with twenty seven eventful years of Maratha history. He is being looked upon as one of the greatest personalities in Maratha history and the story of his career has an abiding interest. His achievements may be summed up as the establishment of the Maratha supremacy in the south-east and of political hegemony in the north. When he rose as leader of the Maratha people, the Maratha State was in a perilous condition. It was a house divided against itself, menaced on the east by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, its march southward was barred by the Nawab of Arcot and Trichinopoly, and its southern sea-coast was in the foreign hands. In this way when the Maratha affairs were in a state of turmoil and utmost confusion, there appeared on the Maratha side a soldier of enterprise and courage, Raghuji Bhonsle. During the critical period of 1740-1755, his role was in no way inferior to that of any other character who passed across the screen of history. He played a notable part in the Maratha struggle against the Mughals in the 18th century. When Mughals had the upper hand in the political affairs of this country

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43. Lyall, A.C.,Berar Gazetteer, p.179.

and all seemed lost after the death of Shivaji, he successfully opposed and faced the authority of Mughals in far off Karnatak, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It shows how the courage of a single individual can materially affect the course of history. At his death he left the nation strong and united. His friendship was solicited by the Rajputs, the Mughals and the Marathas alike.

His greatest diplomatic triumph was entering into the treaty with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan of Bengal, securing to Shahu, Shivaji's conquests and legitimatizing the Maratha claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the Subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He thus knew at first hand the currents and cross-currents of home as well as of foreign politics. He laid firmly the foundation of Maratha power in the territories of Garha-Mandala and other small, principalities beyond the Narbada, and paved the way for a further advance. He understood too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long protracted struggle with them, but he was not a man to surrender his authority without a contest. He behaved the Marathas to deal with the Nizam tactfully. That Raghuji won him over to his side was due to his successful diplomacy.

In the Maratha history one is bound to give a honourable place to Raghuji. By his victories and the acquisition of vast kingdom, he brought the Maratha power to its zenith, though in the beginning of the nineteenth century it was destined to be wiped out from the map of India. Even before the independence, the kingdoms of Sindhia, Holkar and Gaikwad were in existence, but the kingdom of the Bhonsles of Nagpur had fallen. It was due to his incapable sons,

who could not keep up its flag high. Along with Raghuji, the power of the English had also begun to rise in Bengal. Due to family dissensions, the Bhonsle brothers became more or less inactive. That period was a period of much political activity in Indian history. As it has been said- "A state comes to ruin through disunity and this disunity becomes the cause of destruction of countless households."

Raghuji had a remarkable personality, which for nearly thirty years bulked largely in Maratha history. He was the first and most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur. He was by far the most formidable of the Maratha Chiefs, both by the extent of his dominions, and the goodness and number of his troops. On the whole in the Maratha operations no small part was played by Raghuji. He was not a man who would allow his grip on the conquered provinces to relax. He knew the value of continuous hammering. He perceived that the only practicable policy that could succeed in the circumstances was the policy of 'going through'. After having effected the conquest of Orissa and being arrived at a final understanding with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan in 1751, Raghuji led a peaceful life and did not concern himself with the various important projects and expeditions which the Peshwa restlessly carried out in the Karnatak region, because he had long been suffering from a stomach complaint and was almost bedridden during the last two or three years of his life. This great general who extended the Maratha power as far as Katak, breathed his last at Nagpur on February 14, 1755. Thus till his death Raghuji remained a personality to be reckoned with in the politics of Maharashtra.

Thus ends the saga of a great Maratha Chief, brave and fair,

Raghuji died a most fascinating figure in a romance of war and intrigues.

He occupies an important place in Maratha history during the Pre-Panipat period and is also partly responsible for the ups and downs of Maratha history in his time. It is less widely realised how prominent and independent a part he played in shaping the history of this country. Hence he deserves to be accorded his due place among the heroes of Maratha history and we should do justice to this remarkable ruler and statesman whose exploits fill such a wide canvas of India's history.

CHAPTER -I

ORIGIN OF THE BHONSLES OF NAGPUR

SECTION - I

Raghuji's Ancestors

The Bhonsles were a numerous clan spread over various parts of Maharashtra. Their origin is a matter of controversy(1).

The Bhonsles of Nagpur were known as Hingrikar, as their main place of residence was the village of Hingri in the Patas sub-division of the Poona District. Their earliest ancestors known to history were Mudhoji and Rupaji (2). They enjoyed the position of the Chief men of the village and worked as Patels. These two Bhonsle brothers, Mudhoji and Rupaji, were contemporaries of Shahji Bhonsle and were noted roving soldiers (3). Rupaji, it seems resided at Bhsm in the District of Yavatmal where he had a Jagir (4). He was childless. Mudhoji's sons, Parsoji and Sabaji, lived with their uncle at Bhsm and served in the army of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

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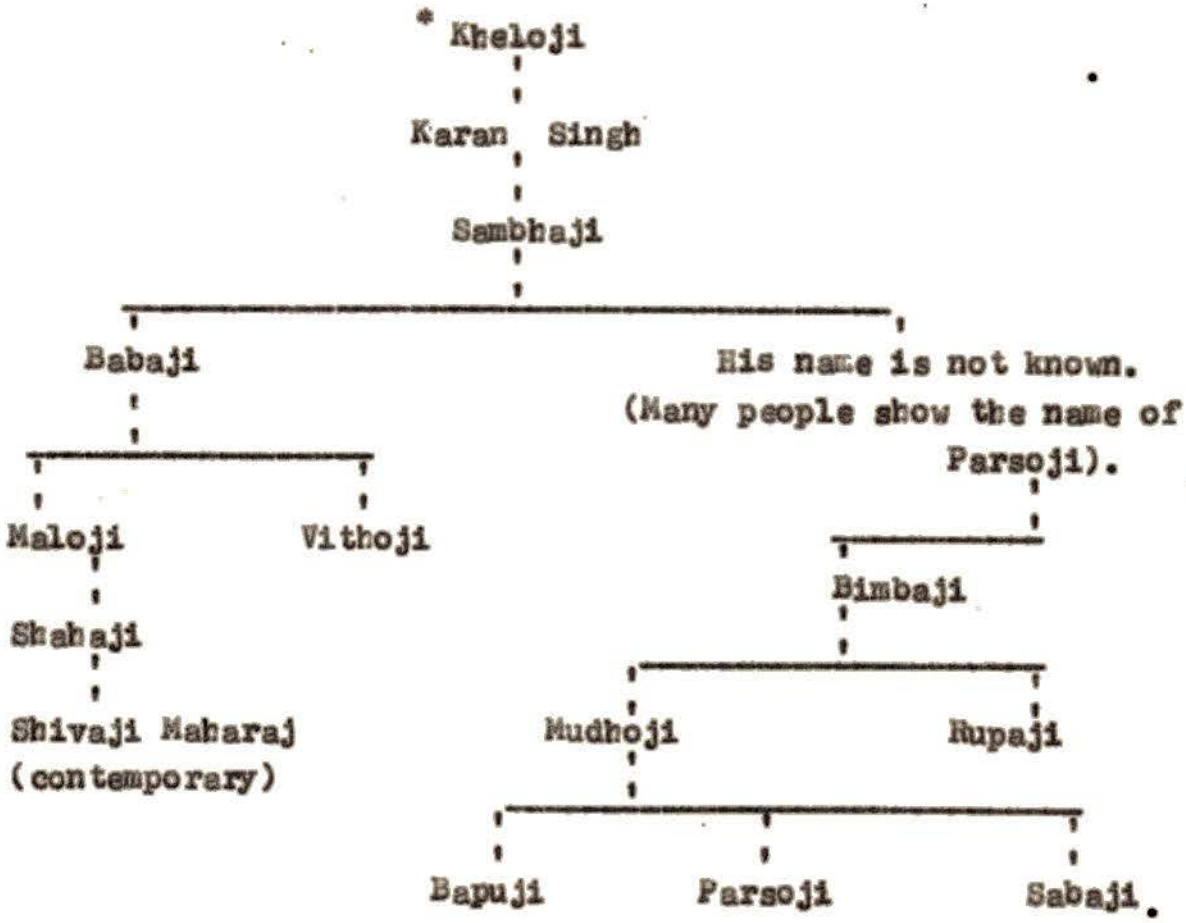
1. Appendix - I.
2. Appendix - II.
3. Kale, Y.M.- Nagpur Prantacha Itihas, p.44; Gupte, K.R.- Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Bakhar p.8. According to it Mudhoji and Rupaji had served Shivaji Maharaj also. Parsoji and Mudhoji's brother Rupaji are mentioned among the eminent-captains of the great Shivaji in Sabhasad and Chitnis Bakhar.
4. Kale, Y.M., op cit., p.46.

The family of Shivaji belonged to Varul. The Bhonsles of Hingri and Varul considered themselves as relations of each other.

This relationship came into greater prominence at the time of Shahu's return to Maharashtra from the Mughal Camp, and at the time when Shahu was looking for a boy whom he could adopt as his successor. The Bhonsles of Hingri were looked upon as the nearest relations of the Chhatrapati. The geneological tree reproduced below proves their common origin (5)*



The clan of the Bhonsles, to which Shivaji belonged, took its name, in all probability, from the village or pargana of Bhose (6).

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5. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.41.
6. Duff, Grant,- A History of the Mahrattas, Vol.I,p.383, footnote.

The Bhonsles of Nagpur were originally the Patels of the village of Deor, in the Satara District, but like other Bhonsles, derived their name from Bhose (7). Russell thinks that the name Bhonsle has been derived from the village Bhosaval, near Bhosa fort in Bombay(8). The village or pargana of Bhose, however, seems to be the most probable source of the origin of the surname. The various clans of the Bhonsle sometimes acted even as rivals(9).

Before the rise of the Bhonsles of Nagpur the region over which they held away was under the rule of the Gonds, who acted as vassels first of the Ahmadnagar King and later of the Mughals(10).

The brothers Mudhoji and Rupaji seem to have been prosperous, and also religious minded. Both of them ordered and secured the idols of Khanderaya Devi, each weighing five and-a-quarter maunds (11). Mudhoji had seven sons, of whom Bapuji, Sabaji and Parsoji were legitimate (12). Kanhoji, Durgaji, Habaji, and Avaji were natural sons. Rupaji had no issue. Bapuji, Parsoji and Sabaji were contemporaries of Shivaji and had been enrolled in his

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7. Duff, Grant, vol.I, op.cit., p.384, foot note, Central Provinces Gazetteer- p.337.
8. Russell, R.V.; Nagpur District Gazetteer- pp.33 and 96.
9. "There is a tradition of their having been rivals in a hereditary dispute, which may have been invented to prejudice the Rajas of Satara against the Bhonsles of Nagpur and prevent their desire to adopt any member of that powerful family. It is a point of honour to maintain the hereditary difference." Duff. Grant, op.cit., I,p.383.
10. It seems that the Bhonsles of Hingri first served the Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar. When Shivaji started his career, Mudhoji and Rupaji joined him.
11. Kale, Y.M. op.cit., p.44.
12. At many places their seniority has been indicated thus- Parsoji, Bapuji and Sabaji.

army. It seems that Rupaji Bhonsle had also joined Shivaji's service, because the names of Parsoji and Rupaji are included in the " નામાંકિત સરદારાંચ્યા મધ્યે " .(13)

Parsoji and Sabaji used to live with Rupaji. He loved Sabaji as his own son. Shivaji also liked Sabaji. One of his orders ran thus,"the Muslims are trying to exterminate Hindus and so our army has been fighting with them often. You should be with them with your soldiers." In 1664 he was rewarded by his master as a "faithful and old servant". The Sanad runs as follows:-

> "You are the old servant of the master, and you have satisfied the master with your faithful service. When the Maharaja came to see the Mulkhami of Vishalgarh, at that time you had requested that this Jagir should be given to you as a reward. On this the Swami was kind to you and gave you the new reward, made you the Kulbab, Kulkan, Khejiji, Lakhdar and Inamdar, and gave you the following villages according to the previous promises"(14). Sabaji is also said to have performed the

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13. Chitnis, Bakhar- p.149.
14. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.13.

" તુમ્હી સ્વામીચે પુરાતન સેવક, એક નિષ્ઠપરાં સેવા કરુન સ્વામીસ સંતુષ્ટ કેલે. તુમચે ગાલાવણે સ્વામીસ અવશ્યક તુમ્હી વિશાલગઢાચા મુકબ્બા દર્શનાસ આલે તે વેળેસ તુમ્હી વિનંતી કેલી કી આપણાસ ઇનામ તે વતનદારી વ અસા દિવા પાહીજે. મહારાજ ત્યાંચવરુન સ્વામી તુમ્હાવર કૃપાળુ હોઉન, તુમ્હાસ નૂતન ઇનામ દેઈ, કુલબાબ, કુલકાન, ખેજીજ લખબદાર વ ઇનામદાર કરુન પૂર્વીચે પ્રમાણે ગાંવ વિલયપરાંત -

(i) ચીજ માજ રાયસૂવાડા તર્ફ રાહત તર્ફ વડકીત ચે.
(ii) વાવે માજ ઘેપરાં કારહા તર્ફ વડકીત ચે."

last rites of Shivaji Maharaj"(15).

The Rajas of Nagpur had descended from Parsoji, who started his career as the Patel of the village of Deor, and later became a Silhedar. He served both Shivaji and Sambhaji(16).

During the time of Shivaji, Parsoji and Prataprao attacked the Varhad and Condwana Provinces, and tried to establish Maratha rule there. Parsoji gained some distinction by his in-roads into the territories of Varhad and Gondwana. He exacted tribute from these regions. He worked in Khandesh during Sambhaji's rule, and acted in collusion with the Pundwala robbers. When Rajaram came to the helm of affairs, Parsoji helped him in the raid of Varhad and Gondwana, and procured for him the right of collecting Sardeshmukhi and Chauth in that region. Rajaram had left Khande Rao Dabhade in Baglana and Parsoji Bhonsle in Varhad, to collect what they termed as the outstanding balance due to the Raja. Parsoji settled at Bham(17) in Varhad and looked after his duties(18).

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15. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat, part II, p.541., but in Chitnis Bakhar, p.183, it is said that Sabaji Bhonsle of Shigrapur had performed the last rites of Shivaji.
16. Grant Duff; Writes that the representative of the family of Nagpur still bears the title of the Raja of Deor.(op.cit., Vol.I., p.72).
17. This village at first belonged to the Jagir of Parsoji's uncle and he used to live there. Parsoji also preferred to live there.(History of the Bhonsle's as told by an old lady in 1811. Govt.Press Nagpur). It is still famous by the name of Rajaji's Bham and is in bad condition in the Yavatmal Taluka. At present it has got no special importance. The remains of big buildings are still found there. Afterwards Parsoji,Kanhoji and his son Rayaji used to live there. Therefore, for two or three generations, it retained its importance. But after the death of Rayaji,Bham village became deserted and it remained like that for many years.At present it is an inhabitated place again. - See Appendix-III.
18. After Sambhaji's death when Rajaram carried on the duties of the Chhatrapati, Parsoji rendered him valuable help. In appreciation of his services Rajaram honoured Parsoji by presenting him robes,

In 1707, Shahu came back to the Deccan after his release from the Mughal Camp. From amongst the Marathas Parsoji met him first with his army in Khandesh and accompanied him to Satara (19). For a time Shahu's fate hung in the balance on account of the opposition of Tarabai. In order to cut at the root of Shahu's claim, she gave out that he was not the real Shahu, (Sambhaji's son) but a fake youngman raised by the Mughals to create division among the Marathas. It was Parsoji and Bahuji's act which set all doubts at rest. Parsoji partook of food with Shahu out of the same dish to dispel the doubt regarding the latter's royal descent and thereafter all important people in Maharashtra acclaimed Shahu as their Chhatrapati. The gratified master conferred upon Parsoji, the office of Sena Sahib Subah and further rewarded him by making him his supreme agent in Varhad and Gondwana, and by giving him more villages in Jagir. The Sanad is dated 1707 A.D.(20).

Jari Patka and the title of Sena Sahib Subah. Gondwana, Devgarh, Chanda and Berar, from where he had exacted tribute, were left under his charge. The views expressed by Chitnis, Duff, Wills and Kale, that Parsoji first got the title of Sena Sahib Subah from Chhatrapati Rajaram is not borne out by known facts. He got it from Shahu for the first time.

19. Sabhasad, Shiva Chhatrapatiche Charitra, edited by Sane, pp.27-28; Sarkar, J.N., Shivaji, pp.350-351; Poona Residency correspondence Series II, p.132, edited by Sardesai G.S. and Sarkar, J.N.

20. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.31. It is said that the Sanad was given in the middle of Shak 1629. It contained the following villages and Mahals:-

(i) Province Ritapur and Sarkar Gavel province Varhad.

(ii) Anagodi etc. were the Mahal of Varhad province. But Anagodi is not in Varhad. Here it seems to be a mistake in copying as stated in Gupte's Bakhar p.31 and Kale's M.P.I., p.47.

(a) Sarkar Gavel Mahal - 46.
(b) Sarkar Narnala Mahal - 19.
(c) Sarkar Mahoor Mahal - 37.
(d) Sarkar Khedley Mahal - 21
(e) Sarkar Pavnar Mahal - 5.

It granted him and his successor in perpetuity the Mokasa of those places which are given in the Sanad. Parsoji died in 1709 A.D. (Shak 1632, Fasli Year 1119) on the Sangam of Krishna- Vainya in Khed near Mahuli (21) on his homeward journey from Satara (22).

The year of the death of Mudhoji's other two sons Bapuji and Sabaji, is not correctly known. It seems that Sabaji died in Raj Shak 44 (A.D.1.2.1717). On the death of Sabaji, his wife Ramau got the Sanad of Sabaji's Mokasa at Kumthe and other

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(f) Sarkar Kalamb Mahal - 19

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Total six Sarkars rate one hundred and nine rupees and eleven annas Mokash, as given in Nagpur Prantacha Itihas by Kale, Y.M., p.48.

21. There is a difference of opinion about the year of Parsoji's death.

(a) Grant Duff says it took place in A.D.1715. (Duff, Grant, op.cit.,I,p.373).

(b) According to Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Kagad Patra Lekhsangraha+ Parsoji died in Fasli Year 1119 (A.D. 1709-10).

(c) The same date has been given in essay no.50(Aitihasik Patra Lekhsangraha). According to this paper Parsoji was cremated at Krishna Vainya Sangam in Manju Khed in Wai province. Shahu Raja gave to Kanhoji, at his own request, a Chahur Jagir in that village for the purpose of "Diya Bati". This Sanad was given in Ashvani shak 1632, dated A.D. 6.10.1710. Parsoji must have died before this date.

(d) The 'NagpurKar Bhonslyanchi Bakhar by Gupte,K.R. 'p.31, says- "Shahu Raja sent off Parsoji after giving him Sanad, and he with his army came towards Ganga and died in Deccan". But this seems to be wrong.

(e) Jenkin's Report of 1826, p.55 says that Parsoji died about 1707 A.D.

22. Also see footnote on p.50 of 'Nagpur Prantacha Itihas'-by Kale, Y.M.

places as Sabaji had no issue (23).

Bapuji was alive in A.D. 1717. In Rajya Shak 43 or 44 (A.D. 1.2.1717) or (22.12.1717) Shahu gave to Bapuji some villages in Mokasa (24). Bapuji died sometime between 1717 and 1722 (25).

The papers of Dharshikar Brahmendra Swami throw light on the early life of Bapuji and Santaji. Bapuji was captured and imprisoned by the Siddis of Janjira. Brahmendra Swami mediated and got Bapuji released. Santaji was also caught by them. He, too, regained his freedom through the intercession of the Swami. In a letter he writes to Raghuji, "Bapuji Bhonsle was released from the hands of Habshis and the chains of Santaji were broken with the help of Nanakaturi" (26).

In 1719, Balaji Vishwanath visited Delhi as a supporter of the Sayyad brothers. While at Delhi, Santaji Bhonsle thought of a plan which could bring military glory to himself. Without informing Balaji Vishwanath, he executed his plan, and hurriedly attacked a part of the imperial army with his own troops. In

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23. Sabaji's wife's name is given as Ramabai in Aitihasik Patra Lekhsangraha, pp.93-94; and Bakhar on p.39. Her real name was Ramabai or Ramau. In the authentic papers of Umravatikar Bhonsles, her name has been given as Ramabai. For this, also see S.P.D.vol.XX, 3, in which her name has been given as Ramau. In Satara, there is still a Mohalla named after her, known as the 'मोहल्ला' of Ramau.

24. Unpublished papers.

25. After this in A.D.1722, Bapuji's son, Ranoji, secured the first Sanad.

26. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.52.

this clash of arms between the Mughals and the Marathas, some 1500 to 2000 Maratha horsemen were cut to pieces, prominent among whom were Santaji Bhonsle,(27) and Balaji Pant Bhanu, the grandfather of the famous Nana Phadnis. Santaji was given a hero's funeral and his brother Ranoji Bhonsle was honoured with a Kalgi and Sawai Dhal. Shahu gave him the title of Sawai Santaji,(28) with fresh rewards. His Jagir was fixed by Shahu (29). Ranoji Bhonsle alias Sawai Santaji was the founder of the Umravati house (30). He was murdered while he was on his way to Delhi(31).

Parsoji's office and title were conferred upon his son, Kanhoji. He carried out his duties to the great satisfaction of his master, Shahu. His administration was very strict. After the death of his parents, he organised the army, established peace everywhere, and realised the taxes. He extended his raids upto Chandrapur, and plundered the neighbouring areas. Darva was taken by Kanhoji and he made Bham his headquarters. The Sena Sahib Subah was honoured by Shahu by presenting him a turban made of golden threads, and a shawl. For this reward, the King did not accept any money from him. Kanhoji Bhonsle was very much pleased by this gift of the King. He was in the good books of Shahu.

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27. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.37-38.
28. Duff, Grant, op.cit., vol.I, p.323.
29. S.P.D.XX, 7.
30. Duff, Grant, op.cit., vol.I, p.325 and pp.3-92. Biography of Brahamendra Swami. Nos. 49 and 52.
31. Irvine- Later Mughals- Vol. I, pp. 388-89.

The Mokasa of some regions north of the Narmudda was assigned to Kanhoji Bhonsle as early as January 1717 (32). Shahu also assigned some provinces to Kanhoji Bhonsle as his own sphere of activity (33). He was given the right to realise chauth from the lands forming his property and was also allowed to make conquests and exact tribute from Gondwana and from the regions lying east to it. In the beginning Kanhoji served his master well. He sent jewellery and gold coins to Shahu (34).

Since the last days of Aurangzeb the war initiative had slipped into the hands of the Marathas. Khanderao Dabhade and Kanhoji Bhonsle had entered Malwa in the early months of 1715, burnt and plundered Ujjain and the regions round about it. Sawai Jai Singh who was deputed by the Mughal government inflicted upon them a crushing defeat and recovered from them all the property that had been plundered. But his success proved temporary, and when he was recalled soon after, the Marathas renewed their aggression with greater vigour. Meanwhile some important changes took place in Maharashtra, one of which was the death of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath. Shahu gave the office to his young but spirited son, Bajirao. This appointment was not liked by Kanhoji and others. Another important change was Nizam-ul-Mulk's increasing power in the Deccan. Kanhoji Bhonsle with or without Shahu's permission fought on the side of

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32. S.P.D. XXX, 17 A.
33. Ibid., p.11
34. S.P.D. XX, 2.

Alam Ali Khan in the battle of Balapur on August 10, 1720. The Nizam's subsequent victory over Mubariz Khan at Shakherkhella made his position unassailable, and he became virtually independent in the Deccan. Thereafter, he took serious steps to weaken the Marathas. Some of Shahu's intimate supporters, notably his Sena Sahib Subah Kanhoji Bhonsle and his Sar-Lashkar Sultanji Nimbalkar, who had grown jealous of Bajirao's increasing ascendancy in the Maratha government began to respond to the Nizam's seductive gestures. The gulf between Shahu and Kanhoji began to widen (35). His treasonable collusion with the Nizam was gradually reaching the ears of Shahu. Kanhoji also began to create disturbances in the Mahals and territories of other sardars, and also of Shahu. Shahu reprimanded Kanhoji for encroaching upon the districts of the senapati (36). He also ordered Kanhoji to desist from molesting the King's private Mahals and exacting 'Ghasdana' tribute from them (37). In order to weaken Kanhoji's position, Shahu ordered the Sena Sahib Subah to send part of his ammunition to the King (38). It seems that Shahu even undertook a campaign against Kanhoji while he was at Tasgaon (39), but Kanhoji had left before the King arrived there.

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35. S.P.D. XX, p.1. Letter in Vividh Dnyan Vistar, February 1927, cited by Sardesai in Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath, p.36.
36. S.P.D. XX, 12.
37. Ibid., XX, 13.
38. Ibid., XX, 8.
39. Ibid., 4. This letter gives details of the campaign. Shahu tried his best to capture Kanhoji at Tasgaon in 1725, but did not succeed.

He was called to the capital and there perhaps occurred the incident of the feast so vividly described in the Bakhar (40).

On Kanhoji's abrupt departure from the capital, Shahu sent letters to the Maratha chiefs to arrest him and bring him to Satara (41). The Peshwa sent a letter to Avaji Kavade, who was his own Sardar in Varhad at that time. Shahu consulted Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Govind Rao Chitnis, and both of them suggested that the task should be entrusted to his nephew Raghuji.

SECTION II

RAGHUJI'S EARLY LIFE:

Raghuji was the son of Bimbaji II, about whom we do not get much information. He had no issue for many years. His wife Kashibai and his mother Bayabai were much worried on that account. They worshipped God and visited Sadhus (42). In Pandavvadi, near

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40. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.40. It gives another story regarding the anger of Shahu on Kanhoji Bhonsle. One day Shahu invited Kanhoji Bhonsle for lunch in his palace. Such an order was given to Raghuji Bhonsle also. Raghuji without hesitation went for lunch, but Sena Sahib Subah hesitated in going there. As expected the FOOD DISHES of Sena Sahib Subah were kept in Shahu's plate. After taking food, Sena Sahib Subah put his fingers in his mouth and vomitted. This news reached Shahu. Kanhoji Bhonsle thought that Shahu had got doubts in his mind and was displeased by his act, so it was not proper to stay there any more. Therefore, without seeking the permission of Shahu, he went back to his Jagir with his army. This incident also finds mention in S.P.D.XX, 3.

41. S.P.D.XX-,17- Kanhoji Bhonsle had run away and he was pursued. Raghuji was assigned for this task. Avaji Kavade and many other sardars were asked to pursue Kanhoji.

42. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.51.

Wai, there used to live one Ramaji Pant Kolhatkar (43), the worshipper of God Rama. By his blessings Raghuji was born about the year 1698 A.D. at his father's village of Pandavvadi (44). His parents, therefore, gave him the name of Raghuji (45). Bimbaji died when Raghuji was a mere child. Not much is known about Raghuji's childhood. He stayed for a few years with his mother Kashibai at Pandavvadi. Thereafter, he came to live with Sabaji's wife Mamau, his grandmother, who had no issue. She was very fond of him and brought him up as her own son. When he grew up he joined the army of his uncle Manoji Bhonsle (46) and took his first lessons in warfare. The Naukarnama, which Manoji had given to Raghuji, when he was in his service, is available. From there Kanhoji Bhonsle brought Raghuji to his place. At that time he was hardly twelve years old. Besides looking after the cavalry, he used to

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43. Konherram's father, Ramaji Pant, was known to be a thorough gentleman and he was a great devotee of God Rama. By his blessings Raghuji was born. Therefore, his parents named him after Shri Ram Chandra, and since then in the family of the Bhonsles of Nagpur, Ram is the principal deity worshipped. Before it, Shri Shanker was the presiding deity in the family of Nagpur, as was the case with other Bhonsle families. Before Raghuji, in Kanhoji's letters "Sri Shanker" is found. Only in Raghuji's letters the name of Sri Ram Chandra has been written as "Shri Sita Kant".
    See Appendix -IV.

44. Jenkins report on the "Territories of the Raja of Nagpur", 1826- p.48. According to Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha" vol.I, No.96- Raghuji Bhonsle was born in Fasli year 1105, which seems to be wrong.

45. Ramaji pant's son Konherram and Bhaskarram came to Nagpur with Raghuji. There seems to be much truth in this story. Raghuji was a devotee of God Rama, though the family deity was Mahadev. He installed the new idol of Rama at Ramtek and was responsible for reviving the religious importance of this ancient place. In his letter head he incorporated the word 'Sitakanta,' meaning, the Lord of Sita, in honour of his favourite God Rama.

46. Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekhsangraha, vol. I, No. 68.

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accompany Kanhoji in his hunting expeditions and military campaigns. Kanhoji loved him as his own son. This affection lasted till Kanhoji was blessed with a son who was to be christened Rayaji Bhonsle. Raghuji understood his position correctly and left the roof of his uncle with barely a hundred horses in search of prospects. He first offered his services to the Raja of Devgarh, Chand Sultan. "This palace and everything" said the Sultan, "is yours. You can come at any time". Raghuji stayed there for sometime.

From there he went to Nawab Ismail Khan of Elichpur in Varah province. There too he was welcomed because he belonged to the family of Bhonsles and was the nephew of Kanhoji Bhonsle. Thence he went to Satara, where, with the help of Govind Khanderao Chitnis, (47) he soon became a favourite of Pratinidhi Sripatrao and Fateh Singh Bhonsle. When Shahu deputed Fateh Singh for invading Karnatak the latter requested the Raja to allow Raghuji to accompany him in the campaign. Raghuji fought well in the Karnatak and established his reputation. He stayed in Karnatak for one-year, and during this period he established Maratha rule there and realised taxes and helped Fateh Singh in many ways. On the return of the army to the capital, Fateh Singh brought the services and qualities of Raghuji to the notice of Shahu. The king appointed him in the place of the disobedient Kanhoji (48).

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47. Govind Khanderao was the third son of Khando Ballal. It seems that he and the Peshwa were good friends. He was an efficient and good natured person.
(Kavya Itihas Prastavana, Itihasanchi Sadhnen, No.I, pp.11-12).

48. Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Kagad Patra Lekhsangraha, No.1, The Biography of Shahu Maharaja, p.37.

In the early part of his career Raghuji appears to have been a free lance soldier, shifting his loyalty from his uncle to the weak Gond Rajas. Both Ranoji and Raghuji Bhonsle were ordered to work under Kanhoji, but they did not seem to have done it regularly. Kanhoji took part in the invasion of Karnatak from 1725 to 1727. Raghuji Bhonsle was also present in that invasion. Raghuji was not slow to grasp the political situation prevailing in the area from the distant Karnatak to Gondwana, and finally threw in his lot with Shahu. This was indeed a wise decision which benefitted Raghuji and also the Maratha expansion. Shahu was very fond of hunting (49) and Raghuji used to go alongwith him (50). One day a tiger attacked Shahu in the forest. The place was very narrow. Shahu fell down. Seeing this Raghuji at once came down from the horse and killed the tiger. From that day Raghuji became a favourite of Shahu, who later arranged his marriage with a cousin of his own wife Sagunabai.

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49. Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Kagad Patra, Lekhsangraha , No.1.

50. Duff, Grant, op.cit., vol.I, p.383- Raghuji had accompanied Shahu in his excursions and being a very bold and expert hunter had ingratiated himself with the Raja, and obtained a great ascendancy over him. Shahu married him to one of the sisters of his own wife of the Shirkey family.

S E C T I O N III

RAGHUJI COMES INTO LIMELIGHT - APPOINTED SENA SAHIB SUBAH

Kanhoji's treasonable activities opened the way for Raghuji's rise. Following the example of Chandra Sen Jadhav, Udaji Chavan and others, Kanhoji openly joined the Nizam (51), who gave political asylum to Kanhoji in violation of an agreement made by him with Shahu. The infuriated king bluntly told the Nizam "you have kept Kanhoji as your servant, so this treaty has been broken"(52) Kanhoji Bhonsle, it seems, did not stick to the Nizam for long. He created disturbances in the territory of the Maratha King. Later on he even tried to reestablish cordial relations with Shahu and sent a member of his family named Sidheshwar for this purpose to Satara,

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51. S.P.D. X, 3 and 73- Kanhoji Bhonsle like Chandra Sen Jadav and Dabhade was trying to desert the Maratha cause and join the Nizam. Bajirao tried to win back Chandrasen, while the Nizam tried to induce Dabhade, Bande and Gaikwad to desert the cause of Shahu.

    S.P.D.X, 39- gives confidential news of the treacherous intrigues carried on by Shripatrao Pratinidhi and Kanhoji Bhonsle with the Nizam. Kanhoji was assigned the task of defeating the Nawab of Chanda and in this he was helped by Shripatrao for attacking his kingdom.

    S.P.D. X 44- also supports this fact that Shripatrao, Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Kanhoji Bhonsle had an interview with the Nizam.

    S.P.D.XVII, 120- Kanhoji wrote to Shahu that he was going on campaign in the lands beyond the Nerbudda. He sent to the King, 1,000 Mohars and pleaded that he could not collect more on account of the bad condition of the country.

    S.P.D.XVII, 111 - Kanhoji Bhonsle was reported to be going over to the Nizam.

52. S.P.D.XX, 10.

and asked him to visit the Peshwa also (53). Relations improved for sometime, but there was a breakdown again.

Ultimately the task of chastising Kanhoji was entrusted to Raghuji. With Shahu's approval, Fateh Singh Bhonsle and the Chitnis called Raghuji Bhonsle and told him "Your uncle has fled away from the imprisonment, therefore, his defeat is necessary and for this Shahu has appointed you". Raghuji Bhonsle replied that with the blessings of Swami everything would go right. Raghuji had been asking Kanhoji, his uncle, for his share in the ancestral Jagir. After coming back from Delhi, both Ranoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle decided to demand from Kanhoji, a share in the management of the family estates. On being apprised of the matter Shahu made some arrangement on his own initiative.(54). This had naturally strained the relations between the nephew and the uncle. Shahu in setting the nephew against the uncle exploited the family feud to his own advantage. While making preparations for the ensuing campaign Raghuji went to Satara where the king honoured

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53. S.P.D. XX, 14.

54. Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekhsangraha, vol.I,No.62; S.P.D. XX, 5; Rajwade-Marathachi Itihasanchi Sadhne-6,No.10; P.R.C.XII,pp.87-88. Shahu personally effected a division between Kanhoji and Raghuji by giving the latter one third of the property belonging to Kanhoji. Shahu agreed to give Raghuji in addition the district of Malkapur exclusively. According to the selections from the Satara Raja's and the Peshwa's Diaries I. Shahu Chhatrapati by C.C.Vad-No.163.- A division of Kanhoji Bhonsle's property was effected. Of the property granted, two third by the Peshwa, and three fourth by the King, were given to Kanhoji Bhonsle and the rest to his brother Ranoji and nephew Raghuji. The three swore by the King's feet to bury all their differences and to live amicably in future. Kanhoji was directed to have his brother and nephew the share assigned to them and also to divide three fourth of the tributes levied by him in foreign territories between him and Ranoji in the proportion of their respective armies.
See Francklin's Shahu Aulum, pp.29-30.

him by giving him the Mokasa of Deor Village (55), in Wai province, and later conferred upon him the title of Sena Sahib Subah, Sanads for Berar and Gondwana, and the right to extend the levy of Chauthai to Chhatisgarh, Patna, Allahabad and Maksudabad. The details of the Sanad are interesting from many points of view. Besides this, Shahu sent two zamindars along with Raghuji, and asked Kanhoji not to touch the royal stores in the region which was formerly in his charge. Raghunath Bhatt Jhipre and Adnar Patwardhan were appointed collectors of revenue of that region; the revenue was to be sent to Shahu. As Kanhoji had no share in Raghuji's jagir, he fell into debts.

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55. At present this village is in the Satara District and is in the possession of the Bhonsle family of Nagpur. The members of the Bhonsle family still live there. In the book "Deorche Raje" the description of their family has been given.

~~Deorxxx~~.

Sanad of Deor was given in Shak 60, Kartiki 11, (22.11.1731) (Unpublished papers).

On account of this grant the Bhonsles of Nagpur were also styled as the Rajas of Deor.

It is mentioned in the Sanad (56) that a number of Maratha Sardars will in future work under Raghuji Bhonsle. The list of these Sardars is given in the Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Bakhar(57).

On receiving the Sanad of Varhad and Gondwana, Raghuji Bhonsle gave a bond to maintain a body of 5,000 horses, for the service of the King; to pay an annual sum of nine lakh of rupees as tribute. He also bound himself to raise 10,000 horses when required and to accompany the Peshwa, or to proceed to any other

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56. This Sanad was given on Rajya Shak 49, Phalgun Shuk 5, 1644 (A.D.1723). According to it Raghuji was authorised to collect the Chauth and Mokasa of these provinces - Pargana Ratipurr Sarkar Gonval, Varhad province, Varghat and Chhatisgarh provinces, Bastar province, Maksudabad province, Patna and Allahabad. Though its original copy is not available, its duplicate copy is available. It seems that this Sanad was awarded very late. These two Sanads have been given in the Nagpur Bakhar p.42. Later on the relations between Raghuji Bhonsle and Peshwa Bajirao became strained. This Sanad is important, because at that time the Marathas had no legal right to collect 'Chauth' and 'Sardeshmukhi' taxes in Northern India.

    The date of this Sanad- 1723 A.D. seems to be incorrect. The grant of Mokasa of Deor near Wai to Raghuji is dated 1731 A.D. (Kale, op.cit., p.59). This Sanad should also be roughly of the same date, i.e. 1730-31 or a year earlier. It is not likely to have been given as early as 1723 A.D. Only after the end of Kanhoji's political career in about 1730 A.D., Raghuji was given this Sanad. When Shahu allowed Raghuji to extend his sway as far as Bengal and collect 'Chauth', he himself had not actually obtained a royal Farman from Delhi to that effect.
    K.R.

57. Gupte, op.cit., pp.43-45.

quarter where he might be called upon to go.(58). The terms of this bond are important for determining the relations of Shahu, Raghuji and the Peshwa. Very few of these conditions were fulfilled by the Bhonsles.

This arrangement was effected during the absence of Sripatrao Pritinidhi, who had been sent into the Konkan by the Raja. The Pritinidhi was a friend of Kanhoji Bhonsle and wanted to intercede on his behalf. He proposed that Akola and Balapur in Berar province should be restored to Kanhoji on condition of his maintaining 4,000 horses (59), but this was not done.

Full details of the intrigue by which Kanhoji Bhonsle was deprived of his title and Jagir are not available. Bajirao probably had no share in it (60).

The condition of the bond kept Raghuji in complete subordination to Shahu. Side by side with giving certain rights to Raghuji, Shahu also tried to put him under his control as he was familiar with his intelligence, intrepidity and independent nature.

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58. Rajwade, op.cit., XX,p.282. Duff, Grant, op.cit., vol.I. p.384.- The original of the contract (Kararnama) is at present with the members of Umravatikar Bhonsle. Gopalrao Dalvi has published the biography of Raghuji I on page 23. By mistake Kanhoji Bhonsle has been mentioned instead of Raghuji. Raghuji's seal given below makes the whole thing clear.
"पार्वतीनंदनविश्रुत मनसूबदि vol.I. मदाश्रयतः शिवाजीमहाराजस्य मुद्रेयं ----।"

59. Duff, Grant, op.cit., vol.I. p.384.

60. Ibid., p.383. Also see Appendix V.

After getting the Sanad and the title of Sena Sahib Subah, Raghuji arrived in the plains of Jalna from Satara in 1730 with his army and Chiefs, and then he came to Varhad province through Aurangabad. But the Sardars, who were under Atole Shamsher Bahadur (61), did not allow Raghuji to pass through this region, for they feared that Raghuji's followers might plunder it. They suggested that the Sena Sahib Subah should pass through Nanded. But this was very difficult. Dinkar Vinayak and Shivaji Vinyak were serving in Raghuji's army, and their cousin brother, Yeshwantrao Pilaji Prabhu, was the Dewan of Atole's State. Through the intercession of the latter every thing was settled amicably. Shamsher Bahadur Atole met Raghuji and was honoured. Krishnaji Atole joined Raghuji with 4,000 CAVALRY. Shamsher Bahadur also joined him. Along with his army Sena Sahib Subah crossed the ghat of Lakhakvada and encamped at Balapur. Leaving a part of his army there, Raghuji entered Berar with 30,000 troops and started realising taxes on behalf of Shahu. Shujayat Khan Pathan of Akola, serving under the Nawabs of Ellichpur, was easily defeated by Raghuji and his territory subjugated.

After strengthening his position, and establishing his

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61. Deolgaon Raja's Kingdom was in Jalna and on its north lay the kingdom of Shamsher Bahadur Atole. At present there are villages of 'Patilche' in Varhad, in 'Kavilkha' Chikhli Taluka, in Shelgaon, where their family members still live. Their Patilki and Jagir still exists near Poona. Numerous papers concerning Atoles are available. When Atole Sardars tried to stop Raghuji, Rakhmaji Ganesh offered much help to the latter.

rule over a great part of Berar, Raghuji turned his eyes towards Kanhoji Bhonsle, and proceeded towards Bham, the headquarters of his uncle in 1730 A.D. The small fortress was beseiged by Raghuji's army. He was joined by his other uncle, Ranoji. Finding himself in a difficult situation, Kanohji escaped from Bham and ran for safety toward Mahur. He was chased by Raghuji and Ranoji, and was overtaken near Mandar (Vani). Kanhoji had known that Shahu had sent Raghuji against him after giving him the clothes etc. of the office that he had held so far. He had no desire to submit tamely. Both parties made their preparations for the coming contest. Kanhoji was defeated near Vani and taken captive.

After his defeat Kanhoji tried to escape to the territory of the Nizam (62) and sent Vasdev Pandit to Aurangabad to prepare the ground. He also started negotiations with the Nizam through Hirjula Khan, the Subedar of Mahur (63). Raghuji and his uncle Ranoji encircled the fort of Bham and fought with Tukoji Gujar, a chief of Kanhoji. Raghuji defeated and killed him. Kanhoji fled away towards Mahur, hotly chased by Raghuji and Ranoji (64). Kanhoji was defeated a second time near Vani in 1730 A.D. and was also captured alive by Raghuji's army. When Raghuji came to know

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62. S.P.D.XXXIII, 404.

63. Anandrao Sumant scolded him much saying "You beg from the Mughals for your food."

64. S.P.D. XX, pp. 7, 23, 68, 69; S.P.D.XIII, p.41.

about it he got down from his horse and requested Kanhoji to sit in the Palki. Kanhoji refused and used abusive language because he thought that it was nothing but a trick on Raghuji's part to make him a prisoner. Raghuji had no alternative but to make him a prisoner. Raghuji shifted his camp to Rajpur village near Vani and then went to Satara with Kanhoji. The good natured Shahu called Kanhoji's family to Satara and provided all comfort (65). Kanhoji, however, died as a prisoner at Satara (66). The end of Kanhoji's political career in about 1730 A.D. opened up for Raghuji new opportunities in Berar, Nagpur and regions further east.

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65. Ibid, 15 and 16.
66. Duff. Grant, op.cit., vol.I. p.384.

CHAPTER - II

RAGHUJI'S RISE TO POWER

SECTION-I

Raghuji and Rayaji

Raghuji rejoined his camp at Rajur in Varhad and stayed there for twelve years consolidating his position in that region. It was an arduous task, as would be evident from a single example, cited below.

At Akola in Alajpur Subah there lived a very powerful and influential Pathan nobleman named Shujayat Khan.(1) He was a tyrant who ruled by sheer force. He also used to maltreat Brahmans, which Raghuji could not tolerate. He overpowered the Khan and even captured his royal drums.(2) Other obdurate Sardars were also subdued by Raghuji.

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1. S.P.D. XV,82. In 1738 Shujayat Khan and Raghuji fought a battle near Salbardee. Raghuji defeated and took him in custody. Raghuji was going to Bhopal to help Bajirao against Nizam-ul-Mulk in the battle of Bhopal.

2. Shujayat Khan was directed to watch the activities of Raghuji Bhonsle. (S.P.D.XV,26). Raghuji who was moving into Khandesh at the Peshwa's behest found his path blocked by Shujayat Khan. In December Raghuji and Shujayat Khan fought a battle in Thugaon. A heavy engagement took place. In the end Raghuji stepped down from the horse, captured Shujayat Khan and other Sardars and looted the army. (S.P.D.XV, 82; S.P.D. XXX, 207. The correct date of XV.82 is Dec.1737). Raghuji wrote, "By the order of the Maharaj, I started to meet the Peshwa, but in Alajpur Subah, the army of Shujayat Khan checked our advance. So a battle took place. I defeated and captured him, and now am proceeding towards Peshwa." "Shujayat Khan was injured and imprisoned. Six elephants, five thousand horses, palanquins and artillery were captured. After taking five lakh of rupees, Raghuji released him. It is said that Shujayat Khan died on December 26, 1737. After this Raghuji proceeded towards Bhopal to help the Peshwa against the Nizam. But by that time the Nizam had already been defeated. (S.P.D.XV,82. and S.P.D.XXII, 365).

This news reached Nasarjang and on December 7, he called a secret meeting of his supporters. They reviewed the whole situation. Chimnaji Appa was encamped on the banks of the Tapti. Raghuji Bhonsle was coming with 15,000 troops to help the Peshwa. By the order of Shahu Damaji Gaikwad had gone to help Chimnaji. In all 40,000 troops would be assembled to fight Nasarjang. Nasarjang was in a fix. If he faced this army and was defeated, it would be a disgrace for him. He was also perturbed by the news that Bajirao was fast moving towards Bhopal. Ultimately he kept his heavy goods in the fort of Raisin and decided to face Bajirao. The army and war material expected to arrive from Delhi could not reach there in time. He, therefore, collected all types of soldiers and proceeded towards Burhanpur on December 15, starting from Aurangabad he came to Phulambri.(3) From there he proceeded slowly. Shujayat Khan was to meet him, but he had already been defeated by Raghuji. Raghuji spread the rumour of the plunder of Aurangabad. Nasarjang was attacked by Chimnaji, but was saved from complete annihilation because by that time the treaty of Bhopal between the Peshwa and the Nizam had taken place and outstanding issues between the two parties had been settled.

Rayaji Bhonsle was another thorn in Raghuji's side. Even after the arrest and subsequent death of Kanhoji, his son, Rayaji, had continued to hold Bham for a long time. Raghuji besieged the fort of Bham in 1739. (4) Rayaji sought the protection of Shahu.

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3. S.P.D. XXX, 207.
4. Ibid., XV, 82.

The King brought about a compromise between Raghuji and Rayaji. According to this compromise some land was given to Raghuji as Saranjami. Rayaji Bhonsle complained against Raghuji's interference with his Saranjam and requested the Peshwa to settle the question once again.(5) The terms of compromise made between the two were given by Rayaji to Raghuji in writing.(6)

Notwithstanding this compromise, Raghuji's relations continued to be strained with Rayaji. Rayaji refused Raghuji's offer to go to Bengal with him. He even refused to go to Nagpur to settle his affairs with Raghuji. They both went to Satara in 1747 to press their respective claims before Shahu and the Peshwa. Even the Peshwa was not very happy with Rayaji, because the latter played havoc with the former's lands near Umerkhed. It seems that during the last years of his life Rayaji had made up with Raghuji

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5. C.P.D. XX, 32.

6. Aitihasik Patravayavahar- Nos. 426 and 440. Terms of treaty which took place between Raghuji and Rayaji were as follows:-

(Rayaji wrote to Raghuji) "Shahu has given me the Mokasa of 27 Mahals. I shall not disturb in any way the other Mahals. You may realise the Nazar and Ghasdana taxes and I shall be with you. You have to give me Rs.50,000 for personal expenses. I shall accompany your army whenever you go for an invasion in any part of the country. The Khandani which we will get, substracting from it the Sardeshmukhi etc.- The remaining will be divided according to the number of troops. Beside this, I owe a debt of rupees six lakhs. Therefore, I should be given seventy five thousand rupees per annum for the payment of my debt. Furthermore, let me have Rs. 25,000 in lieu of the division of Deogaon and the Sardnjami of the army. This contract may be accepted."

and had joined his army. It is not known when and where he died, but he left behind no successor.(7)

SECTION - II

Raghuji's Conquests in Gondwana and other Neighbouring Territories:

There was plenty of scope for extension of territory for an enterprising man like Raghuji. After consolidating his position at Bhem in Berar, Raghuji turned his attention to the Gond kingdoms of Devgarh, Garha-Mandla, Chanda and the Rajput states of Chhatisgarh. Internal dissensions in these Kingdoms and their wars with other states were the occasions which were availed of by Raghuji for establishing his sway over them. Even before the conquest of these Gond kingdoms by Raghuji, there were inroads of Marathas and the Mohammadens in these Kingdoms. Grant Duff says there was "partial conquest in

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7. From an unpublished dynastic list-Karle Sangraha. A song about him is available in the home of Saint Malakya, who used to live at Ajanti near Darvahaya. In that song it is said that Kanhoji had given trouble to that saint and the saint had cursed him, that when his kingdom would go- he would have no successor. Accordingly when Kanhoji was deprived of his kingdom and was imprisoned, his son Rayaji made a request to the saint for his blessings. The saint blessed him and Rayaji's position became better, but, "દેવાંચા તો આલં તુમચા कुळीचं अंभार। वीजला सबध परचुन नाही येणार."

Gondwana," by Kanhoji Bhonsle, Sena Sahib Subah.(8) Sir Richard Jenkins also tells us that during Chand Sultan's regin the Chauth was levied by Kanhoji Bhonsle and other Maratha officers.(9) According to Sardesai when Shahu came back from the Mughal Camp he assigned the task of realising Chauth and Sardeshmukhi taxes from the Kingdoms lying outside the Maratha Empire to different Maratha Sardars. He gave the Mokasa of Varhad, Khandesh, Mewar, Malwa and Bhaganagar to Kanhoji Bhonsle on January 24, 1717, and asked him to subdue the Gond Kingdom. Kanhoji after conquering Nagpur made it his headquarter. The Gond ruler accepted the authority of Shahu instead that of the Mughal Emperor. Although the Emperor Aurangzeb had also tried to conquer this Gondwana Kingdom during his region, yet he did not succeed fully.(10) The Gonds had established themselves at Chanda, Garha-Mandla and Devgarh. They had been overpowered by the Marathas in the 18th Century. The Nizam of Hyderabad had also marched against Devgarh in 1732 for the purpose of realising tribute from Chand Sultan.(11) In appreciation of his services Rajaram had honoured Parsoji by presenting him robes and Jari Patka. In addition, Gondwana, Devgarh,

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8. Duff, Grant, Vol.I. op.cit., pp. 378 and 442.
9. Jenkins Report of 1827- p.47.
10. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat-Peshwa Bajirao, p.372.
11. Wills, C.U., Gond Maharajas of Satpura Hills, p.170.

Chanda and Berar from where he had exacted tribute, were given to his charge. (12)

Gondwana lay to the north of Varhad and a good part of it was ruled over by inefficient Mughal officers.(13) Raghuji wanted to take advantage of this confusion. First of all he began to create disturbances in the Gond territory of Devgarh.(14) Raja Bakhtbuland had extended the boundaries of the Gond Kingdom considerably. All the land to the south of Satpura hills upto Nagpur was part of the Devgarh kingdom, which comprised two kinds of territories- the hilly area of the north and the plains of Nagpur, Bhandare and the neighbouring lands. Devgarh capital was situated on a spur of the Vindhyas. Bhandare was more important at that time than Nagpur.

Raja Bakhtbuland and his family were recent converts to Islam. They had maintained their relations with their old Gond kinsmen. Their adherence to Islam was only nominal. The ancestors of Bakhatbuland had built the fort of Nagpur. Near that fort Bakhatbuland had founded the present city of Nagpur. The village "Rajpur Barsa" was the old Nagpur of Gond days.

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12. Malhar Ramrao Chitnis Virachit Shrimant Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Ani Thorale Rajaram Maharaj Yanchi Charitra-edited by A. N. Sane-3rd edition, p.51.

13. When Gondwana was partly reduced by Aulumgeer, he obliged a great number of the natives, together with the Rajah, to adopt the Mohammedan religion, and the country remained for a series of years in this situation, the Rajah paying a sort of homage to the Moghal as lord paramount.
(Willis, C.U.- Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.71).

14. Gond Rajgharani-Part II. Also see Appendix VI.

In Raghuji's time Devgarh was ruled by King Chand Sultan, (15) the son of Bakhatbuland. Chand Sultan died in 1735, and left behind three legitimate sons- Mir Bahadur, Akbar Shah and Burhan Shah, the latter two being minors- Walishah was the natural son of Chand Sultan.

A quarrel arose between the legitimate sons on the one hand and the illegitimate one on the other. The illegitimate son, Walishah, killed Mir Bahadur Shah, the elder brother of Akbarshah and Burhan Shah. The mother of Akbar Shah and Burhan Shah, Rani Ratan Kunwar, sought the help of Raghuji for defeating Walishah and for this help she promised ten lakh of rupees in cash and three Parganas in Jagir(16). At that time Raghuji had his stronghold at Bham in Varhad. Nothing could be more welcome to Raghuji than this invitation. He started for Nagpur in Shak 1658 (1736 A.D.)(17). A well contested action took place between Raghuji and Walishah at Patan-Sevangi, to the west of

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15. Raghuji for sometime had sought service with Chand Sultan of Devgarh, after quitting his uncle Kanhoji at Bham with whom he had quarrelled. (Wills, C.U.- Raj Gond Maharajas of Satpura Hills,p.171). The details of Raghuji's service under Chand Sultan are not available from the known source material.

16. Aitihasik Patravyavahar- No. 426.

17. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.71. According to Russell, Chand Sultan's death took place in 1739 (Central Provinces Gazetteer,p.337). Sir Richard Jenkins in his Report of 1827, writes "After Chand Sultan's death Raghuji was invited by the Rani to settle the dispute. Raghuji took the opportunity of appropriating the Devgarh kingdom for himself in 1738 (it is 1739). He put Walishah to death and set up Burhanshah and Akbarshah, the two legitimate sons of Chand Sultan. He concluded a treaty with them by which he received eleven lakh of rupees and several districts in the Wainganga as the price of his assistance, and was appointed the Organ of all communication between the Gonds and the Court of Satara."(P.48)

Nagpur, in which Raghuji proved to be victorious(18). He then crossed the Vashishti and took the road for Bhandare. Making a diversion he captured Pavani(19), a strategic post, and entrusted it to the care of Tulji Ram Pant(20). Raghuji posted part of his army in the vicinity of Bhandare(21).

Walishah had been watching the movements of Raghuji. He sent his Dewan, Raghunath Singh with a big army to fight the Sena Sahib Subah. Raghuji's army had encamped at Sirsaghat across the river Wainganga. Raghuji made his plans for the impending battle in consultation with his Sardar Raghuji Karande. He kept one part of his army at Sonbardee and the other at Gireelee pargana. When the armies faced each other, Raghuji's men pretended to be running away from the field. Raghunath Singh and his Gond army pursued them. Suddenly both wings of Raghuji's army attacked Raghunath Singh and Raghunath Singh did his best, but a large

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18. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., pp. 47-48.
19. This is a place to the south of Bhandare on the river Wainganga.
20. He was another famous sardar, who did not belong to the family of Konherram and Bhaskarram Kolhatkar.
21. Bhandare is the present day name of the town which was earlier known as Bhanarey, Bhanorey, etc.

    At that time a saint named Devbaba used to live at Bhandare. Just as Shivaji was blessed by saint Ramdas, so also Raghuji prayed for Devbaba's blessings. Raghuji took the bag from Devbaba's shoulder and put it on his own. The bag was full of food. Raghuji took out from it some food as Prasad and ate it. Later on he had a Darshan of Muslim Saint, Pirasha Bawa also, and having received blessings from him, he surrounded the place known as Bhanorey, and established his military post around that place.

number of his men were killed or drowned in the river. He himself was wounded and captured. Raghuji succeeded in winning him over to his side and later sent him to Devgarh to play a treacherous part against his own master Walishah.

Raghuji now increased his pressure against the fort of Bhandare or Bhanar. Hari Patil, its Killedar, defended the fort for twenty two days. Ultimately treachery put the the fort into the hands of Raghuji along with its heroic defender Hari Patil. The Killedar's life was spared on the intercession of Raghuji Karande.(22)

The stage was now set for the reduction of Devgarh. The treacherous Raghunath Singh was already there. He tried to throw off Maratha yoke. When Raghuji's army neared Devgarh, Raghunath Singh sent a message to Walishah to come out of the fort. He was surrounded by the army of Sena Sahib Subah and was captured. Raghuji then met the queen, Ratan Kunwar, and her sons, Akbarshah and Burhanshah with whom he came to Nagpur. Ratan Kunwar's son Burhanshah was raised to the throne of his ancestors. The grateful queen looked upon Raghuji as her own son and dividing

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22. From Bhandare Sena Sahib Subah came to Ramshetra or Ramtek with his army and took bath in the holy Ambkund. He gave some land and villages in charity to the Brahmins. The present day temple and Ghat were built by Raghuji. Ramtek is a very important place of Pilgrimage. The betels of this place are famous. At the top of the hill, there is the famous temple of Ram. Every year on Kartik Purnima a big festival is held there. The Bhonsle had donated money for this temple and there is a committee to look after its management.

her territory into three parts, gave one share to Raghuji beside paying him ten lakh of rupees for his expenses. He was appointed the organ for all communications between the Gonds and the court of Satara. (23)Raghuji kept Bhandara, Nagpur and some other territories with him. (24) The central situation of Nagpur attracted Raghuji's eye. He shifted his headquarters from Bham (in Berar) to Nagpur.

The partition was only nominal. The whole Gond territory was really ruled over by Raghuji and the Gond House of Devgarh paled into insignificance. Dewan Raghunath Singh tried to over-

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23. Jenkins, Report of 1827, p.48.

24. The above mentioned Sanad has now been printed in Aitihasik Patra Lekh Sangraha, Nos. 426 and 439 dated 2.2.1739. In this Sanad only ten lakh of rupees and three parganas have been mentioned. They are:

(A) [illegible]

(B) [illegible]

(C) [illegible]

These three parganas were given in Pansupari on hereditary basis. [illegible] 1795.

(D) Raghuji would be consulted in all matters regarding the kingdom and every thing would be done according to his wishes and not of any one else. Raghuji would receive ten lakhs for the expenses of the army.

In this treaty it has been mentioned that the Rani did this, because she thought that only Raghuji could save her from trouble makers. [illegible]

As desired by Rani Ratan Kunwar, her possessions were divided into three equal parts and one of them, namely that containing Gondwana, Pavani, Marud, Multai and Barghat were given to Raghuji the Sena Sahib Subah.
(Kale, Y.M., op. cit., pp.71-74; Wills, C.U.-Raj-Gond Maharajas of Satpura Hills, p.173).

throw the Maratha rule, but did not succeed. Raghuji brought Akbarshah and Burhanshah to Nagpur and kept them in the fort for sometime. But Akbarshah ran away and sought shelter with the Nawab of Elichpur.(25)

For all practical purposes Raghuji stepped into the place of the Gond princes, but continued to acknowledge their nominal authority as also to pay them a part of the income. He had not the heart to give back a second time the country he held within his grasp. What the Raja of Satara was to the Peshwa, the Gond Prince was to Raghuji. The Devgarh family was deprived of all political power but its members were supported as state pensioners by the Bhonsles, and received one-fourth share of the state revenue. But this was soon afterwards converted into an annual cash payment.(26) Raghuji reduced the Gond King to the position

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25. The Bakhar of the Bhonsle of Nagpur by Waman Daji Oak published in 1855, pp.35, 41, gives the facts in this way. "About the year 1742, Dewan Raghunath Singh having excited dissensions between the brothers Burhanshah and Akbarshah, the Marathas were called into the aid of the former, while the latter was supported by the Gonds. Akbarshah was forced to run away and he went to Asaf Jah in Berar. There the Sena Sahib Subah managed to get him poisoned by Asaf Jah's cook. This pleased the surviving brother Burhanshah and he handed over his deceased brother's share of the kingdom to the Sena Sahib in Samvat 1799 (1742 A.D.)."

    But Jenkins writes that dissensions broke out between these two brothers in 1743. Akbarshah was forced to fly to Hyderabad, the Gonds who sided him being hunted down and massacred without mercy. (Richard Jenkins' Report of 1827, p.48. He gives 1743 as the date of Raghuji's final entry into Devgarh).

26. Wills, C.U.; The Raj-Gond Maharajas of the Satpura Hills, p.174.

of a nominal sovereign. The only function of sovereignty left to the Gond Raja of Devgarh was applying the Tika to the forehead of the Bhonsles on their accession, and affixing his seal to certain revenue papers.(27) The arrangement continued right up to the end of the Bhonsle rule of Nagpur. The Bhonsles considered themselves as ruling on behalf of the Gond rulers.

SECTION III

The Conquest of Garha and Mandla

There is evidence to show that it was Raghuji I, the Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur, who first over ran Garha-Mandla, Colebrooke in his narrative of a journey from Nagpur to Mirzapur in 1801 remarks on reaching Dhuma that "near this place is said to have been

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27. Russel, R.V., Central Provinces Gazetteer, p.17.

The Bhonsles used to pay part of their income every year to the Gond Kings. In the account books of those times it is mentioned that this part of income belonged to the Gond Kings. The Bhonsles never failed to record it in their account books. As the Peshwas used to get the honour and decoration and garments etc. from the Chhatrapati of Satara in the same waythe Bhonsles of Nagpur used to get a Tilak from the Gond Kings. This practice was continued by the British Ambassador of Nagpur. (Forester's Vakil, Part VIII).

The bonds of friendship had lasted long as narrated in "Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories" p.72. "Burhanshah, the son of the conquerred Rajah, has still handsome allowance and the fort to live in; and the confidence which the late Mudhoji placed in him was great, for what could be the greater mark of it in the east than putting his family and women under his charge, when he went upon any war like expedition which he constantly did."

See Appendix- VII.

fought a memorable battle between the forces of the first Raghuji and those of the Raja of Mandla; it decided the fate of the Gond Prince."(28)

Garha would be directly on his line of march to the east and was doubtless taken. Raghuji had already intervened in the affairs of the adjoining Raj-Gond state of Devgarh. When Baji Rao was busy fighting with the Nizam at Bhopal in 1737-38, Raghuji proceeded as far as Allahabad and exacted tribute from the Raja of Garha-Mandla. The last independent chieftain of that place was Nizamshah. But he had perished early, gallantly defending his independence against the ambition and unprovoked hostility of Raghuji-I. His son became tributory to the Bhonsle. But the Chief of Tejgarh revenged some injury, by inviting a Maratha army from the eastern confines and guiding the invasion of Garha.(29)

This expedition undertaken without regular sanction by him was highly resented by Baji Rao. The exclusive right of collecting revenues and levying contributions north of Nerbudda had already been secured by the Peshwas. Fortified by this claim dating back to his father's time Baji Rao seized the opportunity presented by Raghuji's absence in the Karnatak, and the pre-occupation

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28. Life of Colebrooke- p.450, footnote 2.

29. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, pp.215-216.

of his Dewan Bhaskar Pant in Bihar, to make himself master of the Garha-Mandla kingdom which Raghuji had so recently conquered. The seizure of Garha-Mandla by the Peshwa, near the centre of Raghuji's dominions was a standing offence to the Nagpur Bhonsle.(30) It was a counterblast to Raghuji's success in 1739, when Balaji Baji Rao Peshwa three years later made himself the master of Garha-Mandla country.

Raghuji, who was engaged in the Karnatak expedition at this time, bitterly complained to Shahu of Balaji's encroachment upon Garha-Mandla, which, he thought, was his sphere of activity. Along with Bengal, Allahabad, and a few other places, Garha-Mandla too was one of the bones of contention between Raghuji and Balaji. Raghuji wrote to his agent at Poona that the Peshwa be requested to issue orders to Vishwas Rao Moreshwar to stop his raids in the territory of Garha-Mandla. Vithal Balal, the Subedar of Mandla, went to Garha, and crossing the Nerbudda, he captured some places held by Vishwas Rao Moreshwar. Vishwas Rao asked Vithal Balal to leave the fort, military posts and the entire territory. Vithal Balal insisted that according to the Sanad Raghuji was the master of those places. Vishwas Rao Moreshwar, thereupon left those places, but began to create disturbances in the adjoining areas. The zamindars of these areas also complained about the atrocities. Vishwas Rao was defeated at two or three places and he retreated

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30. N.H.M.- Vol.II, p.213- Raghuji complained to Shahu that Balaji had captured his posts of Garha-Mandla and ruined his parganas of Sivani and Chopar. The ruler of Mandla immolated himself to escape disgrace.

twenty miles off Tejgad. Raghuji warned him that in future he would be checked if he committed such activities.(31) The Bhonsles were successful in recovering these places only after protracted negotiations and many disappointments. The quarrel between Raghuji and Balaji was finally settled by Shahu in 1743. (32)

Now Raghuji turned his attention towards the principality of Chanda. Previously Shahu had established his authority in Berar and Chanda in Central Provinces round about 1715.(33) Sultanji Nimbalkar and Kanhoji Bhonsle were sent to look after the affairs of Chanda.(34) Kanhoji Bhonsle was assigned the task of defeating the Nawab of Chanda and Shripatrao was asked to help him in defeating the Nawab, if the Nawab raised his head against Maratha

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31. S.P.D., XX,33.

A letter in S.P.D. XIII,13, mentions that Bajirao took an expedition towards Garha-Mandla as early as in 1728 to oppose Bhaskar Ram. But who could be this Bhaskar Ram? Was he the C-In-C.of Raghuji who had led expedition into Bengal or some one else? But this Bhaskar Ram could not have been the C-in-C. of Raghuji, because he was the brother of Konherram, and Konherram had been sent by Shahu along with Raghuji, when the Sanad was conferred upon him in 1730-31.

Letter No. 33 dated 9.1.1729 of S.P.D. XIII, also mentions that Bajirao had the intention of going to Devgarh and Bundelkhand.

These letters prove that long before the encroachment upon these provinces by Raghuji, Bajirao had access to these territories.

32. M.H.M., Vol.II, p.219.

33. S.P.D., XX,I.

34. Ibid., IA.

rule.(35) The fate of the Gond rulers of Chanda had been sealed when Devgarh and Garha-Mandla had come under Raghuji's sway. During the reign of Ramshah, Raghuji invaded the kingdom of Chanda, but being impressed by the saintliness of the King, he left the country unmolested. His successor, Nilkanth Shah, had earned the reputation of a tyrant. To deliver the people of Chanda from his tyranny, Raghuji invaded his country and made him a captive. The fort of Chanda was delivered to Raghuji by the treachery of a Dewan, and after some fighting, a treaty of partition was concluded in 1749 between him and Nilkanth Shah.(36) In 1751, the fort and town of Chanda were finally ceded to Raghuji and the Raja became a prisoner. The successor of Nilkanth Shah was granted pension by Raghuji. Among the Gondwana territories of Raghuji, Chanda was next in importance to Nagpur.

The Maratha authority was partially established in Chhatisgarh during Bhaskar Pandit's first expedition to Bengal in 1741-42. He reduced the authority of the Rajas of Chhatisgarh and carried on invasions into Bihar. It is uncertain whether before this period the Marathas had ever penetrated into Chhatisgarh, which was governed by the two Rajas of the old Ratanpur family both known as Haihaivanshi. Their residences were at Ratanpur and at Raipur. The first settlement involved only a tribute, but in 1745, the Raja

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35. S.P.D., XX,39.
36. Jenkins, Report of 1827,p.56; Aitihasik Patravayavahar No.441.

of Ratanpur was deposed. By the year 1755 Maratha rule was extended over the whole of Chhatisgarh and Sambalpur, and other neighbouring landlords were also reduced to insignificant.(37)

Thus Raghuji plundered the country from Berar upto the gates of Allahabad. He subdued several of the princes whose territories bordered on his principality. The dissension which occurred in the Devgarh Raja's family enabled him to acquire more territory. His possessions included the greater part of Berar, Gondwana, Garha-Mandla, part of Rewa, andthe territory of the Rajas of Raipur, Ratanpur, Chanda and Chhatisgarh. He established himself in Nagpur, where he reigned nominally as the representative of the Gond prince from 1743 to 1755. Devgarh and Chanda formed the nucleus of the Bhonsle dominions. Though the Chief of Chanda was soon reduced to the situation of a mere prisoner, both in name and in reality, the Devgarh Prince preserved his nominal superiority to the Maratha master of his country and his officers were associated in most of the acts of the government relating to the revenues.(38)

Sometimes revolts and disturbances occurred here and there in the principality of Gondwana which belonged to him. After

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37. Jenkins Report of 1827, p.56.

But R.V.Russell says that Ratanpur, the capital of Haihaivanshi kingdom had capitulated without striking a blow in 1741 on the advance of the Maratha general Bhaskar Pant, and four years afterwards, with the deposition of the last Raja a Rajput dynasty ended.

38. Jenkins Report of 1827, p.63.

his arrival at Nagpur, he came to know that Brahmapuriwala (39) had collected some troops and used them for molesting travellers. A fort named Brahmapatri was under the command of Killedar Kheman Singh. He and his brother created a sort of anarchy in the region. Raghuji entrusted the task of restoring law and order in the region to Raghuji Karande. Raghuji directed his footsteps towards Brahmapuri and Raghuji Karande followed him. Kheman Singh Jamadar and his brother Abhiram offered stiff resistance for twelve days, but Karande ultimately overpowered them. Kheman Singh was captured and brought before Raghuji. Raghuji thinking that such heroes should not be killed, pardoned him and appointed him to the charge of the fort of Bhanarey.(40) Kheman Singh (41) was soon after appointed to the charge of Bhandare in place of Hari Patel who had proved unworthy of the trust that Raghuji had reposed in him. Kheman Singh became a trusted lieutenant of Raghuji. Tulji Ram was put in overall charge of Gondwana.

After consolidating his position in Berar and Gondwana Raghuji paid a visit to his royal master at Satara. In recognition

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39. Brahmapuri is a town, 40 miles north east of Chandrapur.

40. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.49. Y.M.Kale differs from the story given in the Bakhar. He says that Raghuji wanted Kheman Singh to be put to death. He pardoned him on the intercession of Karande.

41. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.75.

of his services Shahu gave the Sena Sahib Subah a new Sanad(42) which is important from many points of view. The Sanad confirmed the conferment of not only what Raghuji had already conquered, but it also included far off territories in northern and eastern India which he was expected to bring under Maratha rule. How far Shahu was justified in this act, as these very territories became a point of content between Raghuji and the Peshwa, is an open question.

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42. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.76.

Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.50. The Sanad dated Shak 1660 (A.D. 1738)

1. Subha Lakhauri	2. Subha Bedar
3. Subha Bitiyacha	4. Subha BundelKhand
5. Subha Maksudabad(Patna)	6. Subha Allahabad
7. Subha Dacca Bengal	8. Subha Hazipur Patna

(it is a small place in the middle of Orissa.)

Raghuji got the Sanad for collecting the Chauth and Nokasa of Devgarh, Garha, Bhawargarh and Chanda.

This very information given by C.U. Wills runs as follows:

"while returning from Satara Shahu Chhatrapati bestowed Gondwana, Jhadi upto Katak free of revenue upon the Sena Sahib Subah." (R.M.S.H., p.173).

SECTION IV

Raghuji and Peshwa Bajirao

Only outward amity had existed between the Peshwas and the Bhonsles, who later established themselves at Nagpur. Kanhoji Bhonsle was not very happy over Bajirao's appointment. Raghuji's and Ramoji's (43) support to Bajirao and Chimnaji Appa during their raid in Malwa and Bundelkhand in 1728-29 had been lukewarm. The crisis in their relations came about at the time of Bajirao's seige of Bhopal in 1738.(44) The Peshwa wanted to pool all the resources of Maharashtra against the Nizam and sought Raghuji's support in the venture. Raghuji refused to oblige the Peshwa,(45) making many

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43. Ramoji Bhonsle later joined the Peshwas and served them faithfully.
44. S.P.D.XV, 56, 58.
45. Ibid.,XX, 18.

According to some newly published letters, it seems that Raghuji was thinking of helping Bajirao actively. Chimnaji Appa, the brother of Bajirao, was encamped on the Bank of Tapti river near Varangaon in the Deccan. His objective was to stop the help which was coming from his son to the Nizam. Raghuji wrote to Chimnaji Appa, "I am thinking of attacking Bham, which already belonged to Rajshree Kanhoji Bova Bhonsle. I wish to surround, attack and capture the place. But it requires some political consideration. So for the time being, I have left this idea and started with the army to join hands with Peshwa. Because the subedar of Alajpur named Shujayat Khan tried to stop me with his army, I fought with him, but by the blessings of the King, I defeated the enemy and captured the place Salbardee. After this episode, I am marching along with my army to join hands with Rajshree Rayaji (Bajirao).(S.P.D. XV,82).

According to R.C.Majumdar, the Peshwa invaded Malwa at the head of 80,000 troop and came up with the Nizam at Bhopal. He posted a strong detachment under his brother on the Tapti to prevent relief going to the Nizam from the Deccan. Raghuji Bhonsle at the same time defeated Shujayat Khan in Khandesh, and no troops could march to Bhopal to succour the Nizam from the Deccan.

(Maratha Supremacy, p.90).

lame excuses, one of which was that he could not leave Berar as the Nizam was likely to invade that region. Even the threats of Bajirao failed to make Raghuji budge an inch from the position he had taken.(46) This act of Raghuji was nothing short of shirking a national obligation. He even wanted to take advantage of the Peshwa's engagements elsewhere for his own advantage.

He captured two important places- Garha and Mandla, in the erstwhile Central Provinces. Bajirao regarded it as an encroachment on his own jurisdiction as he had looked upon that region as his special preserve. The story of Raghuji's invasion of Allahabad at this time and the defeat and death of its Subedar, Shujayat Khan, seems to be doubtful. Raghuji attacked Katak while Bajirao's army was fighting the Portuguese on the Western Coast.

Defeat of Avaji Kavade- A.D. 1739:- Baji Rao's interest had clashed in many ways with Raghuji's and he decided to punish him. As soon as he became free from the Nizam's affair, he sent his

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Kale,Y.M., op.cit., p.78.

The story of Raghuji's invasion of Allahabad has been mentioned by Grant Duff (Vol. I, p.402). The description of this invasion is not found anywhere else.

G.S.Sardesai also doubts this invasion (Madhya Vibhag,II, p.422). One thing more may be added. Shujayat Khan, who was defeated by Raghuji, was not the Subedar of Allahabad, but was the Subedar of the Nizam at Khichpur, (S.P.D. XV,42). The letter of Raghuji to Chimnaji.

46. The Peshwa entreated the Raja to compel the Senapati then at Songarh near Surat, to join him, and Shahu, to that end, wrote a peremptory mandate with his own hand.

Chief, Avaji Kavde, with Antaji Mankeshwar as an assistant to punish Raghuji. Padmoji Jachak was sharing the company of Avaji at this time. Raghuji sent his Sardars- Bhaskar Hari, Krishnaji Atole and Ali Khan (47) to fight against Avaji. The battle that took place near Umravati was undecided. The second battle took place at Nagpur in which Avaji was defeated.(48) About this defeat Avaji Kavde writes on April 29, 1739. "It was the wish of God otherwise the situation would not have been in favour of the Bhonsle."(49)

Avaji Kavde wrote to Chimnaji Appa that after his defeat by Raghuji, he had gathered together the remnants of the fugitive army to give Raghuji another battle when he was joined by Appaji Somwansi, who advised a conciliatory policy and himself undertook to restore friendly relations with the Bhonsle. The two (Kavade and Somwansi) marched towards Nagpur to meet Bhaskar Ram, who, however, evaded meeting them by striking a retreat into the interior. While Kavade was going towards Garha and Mandla, he received, a communication from the Peshwa not to go there, so he went back to Satara.(50)

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47. Later on these Sardars became famous in the court of Raghuji.
48. S.P.D. XV, pp.41-43, the actual battle between Raghuji and Avaji did not take place.
49. S.P.D.,XXX, 231; XX, 19; XV, 77.
50. Ibid., 231.

Chimnaji wrote, "Maharaj was satisfied by the news of the defeat of Avaji Kavade. By his defeat, Raghuji has made his position strong. He is also intelligent and bold, so he should be brought under our control."(51).

Raghuji complained to Shahu against Bajirao because Avaji had plundered the territory of Raghuji. Thereupon, Shahu wrote to Bajirao, "Your soldiers had created chaos in the territory of Rajshree Raghuji Bhonsle, Sena Sahib Subah. They should be warned that, they should not send their army to Varhad province. They can-have a dialogue."(52) This letter and Nadir Shah's invasion thrust Bajirao in a compromising mood. The Peshwa at least outwardly reprimanded Avaji Kavade for carrying on raids in the districts of Raghuji. He was instructed not to go to Varhad, which belonged to Raghuji. Thereupon, Avaji Kavade replied that he had never moved out of his jurisdiction and he had no reason to go there. Mohammedans were creating trouble in the country. The armies of Raghuji and Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Sarlashkar were creating disturbances in the country. The Kamavisdar had been unable to realise the money for the last three years. Therefore, he had gone to Mahur Mahal to realise taxes. After settling the matter there he would go to Khandesh. When he saw Raghuji realising Ghasdana from his Sardeshmukhi Taluks, he naturally followed him. Otherwise he had no desire to go to other places to create disturbances. He did not

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51. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat-Vol. V, p.334.
52. Aitihasik Patravayavahar- No.437.

go to Badanpur and Khandaravahi, but went only upto Lohgaon in Paleen Pargana. The rebuke, therefore, was undeserved and uncalled for as he had not gone any where to create disturbances.(53) Shortly after Bajirao wrote to Chimnaji, "Our domestic quarrel with Raghuji Bhonsle is now insignificant. There is no fear of the Portuguese. In Hindustan Nadirshah is the only powerful enemy of both Hindus and Mohammedans, all should unite to throw him out."(54)

Bajirao called Chimnaji Appa along with the army to North India, leaving the Portuguese affairs unfinished. He also called the Nizam's son, Nasir Jang to his help. Meanwhile, Nadirshah had gone back from Delhi.(55)

The crisis over, Chimnaji had adopted a stiffer attitude on account of the intrigues of Raghuji and had written to his brother thus, "the poison may not spread through papers. I shall be grateful if you may give the control of Raghuji in my hands. Upon getting such control over Raghuji, Avaji Kavade would break him like the thread of Sutli."

Bajirao in his reply suggested patience.(56) He wrote to Chimnaji Appa advising him to bring over Raghuji Bhonsle to their side as he would be of much use when they would march against Nadirshah. Raghuji was to be addressed in a conciliatory manner, although he had put down Avaji Kavade. "Being in our service, if Raghuji does

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53. S.P.D. XXX, 204.
54. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.393.
55. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat, Vol.V, p.335.
56. S.P.D. XV, pp.73-74.

some injustice, that does not matter much. But if he goes against us, then it would be very dangerous. Now we should leave the idea of defeating him and by all means, we should bring him under our control. It can be done after having a compromise with him, and if he is afraid of this, then a letter showing kindness can be sent to him. He is very brave. At present, foremost task is to defeat Nadirshah. Therefore, be quiet in this matter, have a compromise with him, treat him politely and thus keep him under control."(57)

The subsisting difference between Raghuji and Bajirao arose from Raghuji's having taken the important post of Garha and Mandla and not having joined the Peshwa when he was ordered to do so according to the terms on which he held his lands and title. The Peshwa affirmed that he had no authority for levying contributions north of the Nerbudda and declared his determination at the time of his marching from Poona at the end of 1738, to enforce restitution not to the owners, but to the Maratha state, and to punish aggressions. A temporary compromise took place on the arrival of the Persian at Delhi; but the dispute was unsettled and nothing but a sense of injury to their interests prevented an open war.(58) It seems that Bajirao and Raghuji had a meeting and they were reconciled. There is reason to suppose that Bajirao unfolded many of his schemes to Raghuji in order to secure his cooperation. The plunder of the Karnatak, an addition to his own territories in the Deccan, and the

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57. S.P.D. XV, 77.
58. Maratha Mss. and original letters.

future position of Bengal and Hindustan may have been suggested by the Peshwa to excite his ambition and cupidity.

Raghuji Bhonsle lent his support to the Peshwa during the period of the crisis and later took part in the negotiations with the Deep Singh Mission.

The rivalry between the two houses dated back to the days of Peshwa Bajirao I. The sphere of influence of Raghuji and Bajirao had come into conflict when Bajirao secured one third of Bundelkhand for the timely help he had rendered to Chhatrasal against the Bangesh. A scramble arose between Raghuji and the Peshwa, each trying to secure the eastern and northern provinces for himself. The Peshwa had already occupied Bundelkhand and appointed Nana Shanker to its management, thus giving sufficient umbrage to Raghuji as an encroachment on his sphere. Soon after his appointment as Sena Sahib Subah, Raghuji began to show signs of antagonism to the Peshwa. The Peshwa on his part did not look with approval and equanimity on Raghuji's activities in the eastern provinces.(59)

Both Bajirao and Raghuji were men of strong personality and independent nature. Like the Dabhades, Raghuji also throughout stood against the dominance of the Peshwas. Their interests clashed in territories commonly claimed by them and as such clashes, verbal and armed, were frequent between them. But none of them was unpatriotic and both knew how to unite in a common cause for the service of the State. Raghuji avoided an open clash with Bajirao

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59. S.P.D. XIII, p.1.

knowing full well his abilities as also the influence he wielded over the Chhatrapati. Bajirao, too, acting on the advice of his brother Chimnaji Appa, settled his differences with Raghuji amicably. Moreover, so long as Shahu was alive such differences were not allowed to take a serious turn.(60) Neither Bajirao nor his son Balaji were able to command the services of Raghuji in their capacity as the Peshwa or Prime Minister. Raghuji always had a feeling that he was in no way inferior to the Peshwa.

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60. S.P.D. XX, p.I; Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.176; Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.80.

CHAPTER III

RAGHUJI'S SOUTHERN CAMPAIGNS

SECTION-I

KARNATAK- 1740-1748.

Karnatak was considered to be a prized possession by the Marathas since the time of Shahji Bhonsle. Shahji was given a Jagir in the Karnatak, but the Marathas lost it after his death. When Shivaji came to power, he tried to retrive that lost jagir. His grand coronation in June 1674 had greatly reduced his treasury. Since then he had not succeeded in securing any very rich prize, though his roving bands had raided many places in Adil Shahi territory. He, therefore, looked about for some fresh field. There was an outlying province of this kingdom which had enjoyed many years of peace and prosperity and whose wealth was fabulous.

The territory annexed by Shivaji in the Karnatak was estimated by Sabhasad to yield twenty lakhs of hun a year and it included a hundred forts. The whole of the Karnatak was "peeled to the bones" by his system of "organised plunder" and exaction.(1) After his marvellous success attending the invasion of the Karnatak, Shivaji left the Madras plains.

The Nizam-ul-Mulk had also cast a covetous eye on the same

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1. Sarkar, J.N.; Shivaji and His Times, p.265.

sphere, as he claimed the south to be a Mughal possession even since its conquest by Aurangzeb and Zulfikar Khan. (2) Once in 1721, the Nizam had entered the Karnatak, but was prevented from realising his aims because he was recalled by the Emperor to Delhi which had obstructed his work. Thereafter, Baji Rao, the Peshwa, appeared on the scene and allowed the Nizam no leisure to direct his attention to the south. The Peshwa and his brother Chimnaji Appa had been slowly developing the policy of pushing the Maratha conquest in the south. So Baji Rao wrote a letter to Chimnaji Appa in 1731 to check the advance of the Nizam. (3)

The Nizam-ul-Mulk had established his authority in the Karnatak for fourteen years, when no other power had entered that province. When, in 1739, the Marathas crossed the river Nerbadda, the Nizam-ul-Mulk had pushed them out, but when Nadirshah came to Delhi, the Peshwa at once made three successive attacks on the

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2. Aurangzeb had put the Karnatak under the Subhas of Bijapur and Hyderabad. The Sanad of Chauthai granted to Shahu by the Emperor Muhammad Shah included Hyderabad, Bijapur, Karnatak, in addition to the four other Subhas of Deccan. According to this Sanad the tributory states of Tanjore, Trichinopoly and Mysore were also subject to the levy of Chauthai. (Duff, Grant, Vol. I, op.cit., p.368). The Nizam as the Subedar of the Deccan claimed that all these territories belonged to him. The various Nawabs of Karnatak fought among themselves, the strongest of them trying to assert his authority over others by the simple law of might. Among the stronger Nawabs mention may be made of those of Arcot, Sira, Kedappa, Karnool and Savnoor.

3. Rajwade, V.K.; Marathanchi Itihasanchi Sadhnen, Vol.III, No.117. The letter was written in 1731 and not in 1734 or 1737, because in April 1737, Chimnaji was in Konkan.

Nizam. One attack was made by Chimnaji Appa in Khandesh, the other by himself in Hindustan, and the third in the Karnatak province of the Nizam by Fateh Singh and Raghuji Bhonsle.

After the death of Aurangzeb, Shahu became the Chhatrapati. He had always desired to establish Maratha rule in the Karnatak. In 1719, according to a Royal Sanad, the Marathas acquired the right to realise Chauthai from the Mughal provinces. This right they had enjoyed ever since the time of Shivaji, hence Shahu also wanted to keep up this right.

Sambhaji was also an aspirant for that region. By the Treaty of Warna, Shahu had already yielded this field of the Maratha expansion to his cousin Sambhaji of Kolhapur. Both had wanted to root out the Mohammedans rule from the Karnatak.(4) As far back as 1725 A.D. Shahu sent an expedition to the south and asked Khanderao Dabhade (Senapati) to accompany the Pratinidhi along with the Amatya and Pantaji Shivdeo Soman. He also ordered Baji Rao and Kanhoji Bhonsle to proceed to the south along with their armies. (5) An army led by the Pratinidhi, the Peshwa, and the Sarlashkar left Satara in November 1725 and invaded the Western Karnatak. The petty State of Sonda was forced to pay the levies. The Nizam, who looked on the Marathas as dangerous rivals, had sent secret instructions to his commander, Imaz Khan, to thwart their

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4. Shiva Charitra Sahitya, pp. 480-490.

5. S.P.D., XX.4.

plans and obstruct the progress of their armies. (6) .The hostility of their ally and the inability of the Maratha Commanders to sink their mutual differences and work harmoniously defeated the object of the expedition.

The next year's expedition was commanded by the Peshwa and the Senapati, and it took a more westernly route. Though terrible hardships were suffered in the march, the Peshwa succeeded in levying Chauth and Sardeshmukhi on the rulers of Mysore and Arcot. (7) Shahu Sent a letter to Kanhoji Bhonsle in October 1727, asking him to stop the invasion of the Nizam-ul-Mulk's territory in Deccan.(8)

In 1737, Shahu himself started on an expedition into the Karnatak, but as he possessed neither the capacity to lead armies nor the personal valour necessary for success, he could only proceed as far as Miraj in two years.

In 1739, he deputed Raghuji Bhonsle and Fateh Singh Bhonsle to exact tribute from the southern principalities, on the stipulation that one half of the proceeds should be utilised for their expenses and the other half should be remitted to the treasury at Satara. (9) In fact, the Mughal Emperor had assigned five states in the province of Karnatak to Raja Shahu for realising

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6. Khan, Dr., Asaf Jah, p.184.
7. S.P.D. XXVIII. 9 and 10; Aitihasik Tipanen II, p.44; Wilks, Mark,- Historical sketches of the South of India, Mysore, Vol.I, p.141.
8. Rajwade, V.K., Vol.III, op. cit., No.117.
9. Sardesai, G.S., New History of the Marathas, Vol.II, p.252.

Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, in the year 1738 A.D. (10)

The Peshwa could not directly control the older Sardars like Fateh Singh and Raghuji or the Pratinidhi and Babuji Naik, and they often persuaded Shahu to make commitments in defiance of his policy. Baji Rao's brilliant successes first against the Nizam-ul-Mulk and later against the Imperial armies in Malwa and Bundelkhand, only served to excite the jealousy of the stay-at home advisers at Shahu's court. When Baji Rao's successes in the north had come to a climax, his opponents, Raghuji, Babuji Naik, Murar Rao Ghorpade and others, headed by Fateh Singh persuaded Shahu to allow them to undertake a rival scheme, namely, the conquest of the south. (11) Babuji Naik who had claims on the Karnatak based on a grant of Mamlat to him, supported the expedition. By 1725, this opposition became so serious that Shahu tried

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10. Aitihasik Patravayavahar, No.26; 'Bharatvarsha', Vol.IV, No.37, p.60. In Karnatak province, the following places were under the control of Shahu:-

(i) Trichinopoly	(i) Sira
(ii) Chandavar	(ii) Advani
(iii) Arcot or Chandi	(iii) Karnool
(iv) Shrirangpattam	(iv) Kadpe
	(v) Miscellaneous foot-Mahal.

Raghuji had been told by Shahu that revenue should be collected from all these five states. One half of the Mokasa should be given to Yesaji Bhonsle for the maintenance of the army, and the other half should be deposited in the treasury. Raghuji and Yesaji were requested to act with one mind and were asked to protect the forts and the province. Raghuji had to recruit soldiers for the army for the forts and the other infantry was to be recruited by Yesaji. At the end of the year they had to deposit seven lakh of rupees in the royal treasury. They were asked to work there faithfully and wisely. For this purpose Shahu gave them money and authority.

11. S.P.D.XXVIII, p.1; Sen, S.P., The French in India, p.10.

to effect a compromise between Pratinidhi and the Peshwa. After 1725, in the attack of Shriranga Pattam, on the request of Shahu, Fateh Singh had agreed to accompany Baji Rao in this expedition. But the Maratha army suffered heavily in this invasion. Fateh Singh, Pratinidhi, and Raghuji Bhonsle all had gone against Baji Rao after this invasion. Although Shahu had a liking for Baji Rao, yet he did not desert the other Sardars either. Fateh Singh was his adopted son, so Shahu had a great affection for him also. Pratinidhi and Raghuji were on the side of Fateh Singh, so his party became very strong. In fact, all these Sardars were totally against the Peshwa, so Baji Rao decided not to trouble Fateh Singh or to get involved in his affairs. (12)

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12. Rajwade-V.K., Lekh Sangraha, part 1.p.143.
This invasion is stated by Mr. Orme to have been incited by the Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Nizam was at this time at Delhi, too deeply engaged in the intrigues which led to the invasion of Nadirshah, to be able to give attention to those affairs. Orme says that the Nizam-ul-Mulk "obliged to keep his arms turned towards Delhi, where he was equally dreaded and detested....."at length determined to give the Morattoes permission to attack it." (Orme, Roberts- A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan. IVed. MDCC III. But this is not likely as Nizam was then absent at Delhi, and he had subsequently to proceed to Karnatak on a prolonged punitive expedition to restore order after the confusion created by the Marathas.)

M.G.Ranade considers the expedition was the outcome of the policy of some of the leading Marathas who preferred the consolidation of Maratha power in south India to the policy favoured by the Peshwas of undermining the Mughal power in north India.(Rise of the Maratha Power, p.130).

P.Setu Madhav Rao Pagdi writes- "Two months after the arrival in Delhi, the Emperor gave leave to Nizam-ul-Mulk to proceed to the Deccan to put down the Marathas." (18th century Deccan, p.60. Translated from the Masire Nizam of Lala Mansaram- an unpublished Biography of the Nizam-ul-Mulk.)

Many historians are of the opinion that, knowing the ambitions of Raghuji, the Peshwa as to discard one of his competitor, showed to Raghuji the way of the conquest of Bengal and south India upto Karanatak. (Marathi and Angrez- by Narsinha Chintamani

Muslim domination in the south of India had begun to arouse the jealousy of the Marathas. Safdar Ali and Chanda Saheb were harassing the Hindu Rajas in the neighbourhood by extorting high tributes from them. Tanjore, however, had survived by making due submission and at this time grown larger than ever before. Pratap Singh the new ruler of Tanjore had recently suffered at the hands of both Safdar Ali and Chanda Saheb. After the fall of Jinji the Mughals had rapidly made themselves masters of south-east India. Zulfikar Khan's deputy, Daud Khan, had again made one Sadaatullah Khan Nawab or governor of Karnatak, and it was his duty to impose every where the Mughal ascendancy. This task Sadaatullah Khan ably performed and at the time of Raghuji's expedition the whole south-east of the peninsula was under Mohammedan suzerainty.

Chanda Saheb had seized the city of Trichinopoly in 1735 A.D. and from there he turned his attention towards Tanjore and Madura. The Nawab of Arcot, Dost Ali, and his son-in-law, Chanda Saheb, with the help of the French Governor Dumas of Pondichery[R],

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Kelkar, p.160 (Hindi translation).

Wilks says that it was Safdar Ali Khan and Mir Asad, Dewan of Dost Ali, who invited the Marathas to attack the Karnatak and invite with them in destroying Chanda Saheb. (Historical sketches of the South India, p.251. This view is also supported by Shri C.S.Srinivasachari in an article in Indian Historical Research Commission Proceedings, Vol.19, p.1).

Another version is that the Nawab's son, jealous of Chanda Saheb's power invited the Marathas to invade the Karnatak. (Fort St. George- country correspondence, 1740, p.12).

were disturbing Pratap Singh Bhonsle of Tanjore, and the ruler of Trichinopoly, Chanda Saheb after taking possession of Trichinopoly established his post there. His ambition and a city proved so inordinate that he became an enemy also of the Nawab Dost Ali and his entire household. So when the sad tale of Chanda Saheb's aggression reached Shahu, he despatched Raghuji and Fateh Singh with large forces and instructions to oust Chanda Saheb from Trichinopoly and to make Pratap Singh's position secure (13). Pratap Singh was not regular in the payment of tribute; moreover, he was positively disobedient to the Subedar of Karnatak. Consequently, he was pensioned off and a Mohammedan deputy was appointed to take care of the Kingdom. It was at this time that the southern states requisitioned the help of Raja Shahu of Satara, who incensed at the atrocities committed by the Mohammedans in the Tanjore Kingdom ruled by a collateral branch of his family despatched an army of forty to fifty thousands under the command of Raghuji to wreak vengeance on the wrong doers.(14).

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13. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., p.253.

14. Letters from Fort St. George, 1739, p.61.

In the book Aitihasik Sphut Lekh, part IV, p.1, we get a detailed account of these rulers of Tanjore and how Shahu came for their help. The story runs this:- In the district of Madura, in Pariyakulam Taluka, there is a village named Uttampalyam. An old and famous family of Maharashtra named Nimbalkar used to live in that village. A branch of this family still lives there. Tirumal, the famous king of Madura, died in 1659. After his death the power of the Nayak family began to fall, clashes and conflicts began to arise among his descendants. Formerly

It was only in despair that Pratap Singh implored King Shahu to send an army to his relief. Shahu, who had regarded the house of Tanjore with the kindliest feelings, sent Raghuji with fifty thousand troops (15) to invade the Karnatak. Hence the immediate cause for sending an expedition into the Karnatak was to render help to the relatives of Shahu.

In one of the letters Shahu orders his Sardars in the following words "In the Karnatak province, we had established our authority upto Chandichandavar and Trichinopoly, but now, we have lost the possession of these places. So we have to re-establish our authority there again. The forts which have been taken away from our hands, have to be recaptured. Khandanya, which was agreed upon, has not yet been realised." Therefore, Fateh Singh was ordered to proceed there along with the army and cavalry of the Peshwa and he was ordered to realise six percent of the taxes(Sahotra)

Trichinopoly, Tanjore and Madura, all three were under the Nayak rulers. In Madura, the rule of Nayak rulers went on for sometime more, but in the first half of the 18th century, the Nawab of Arcot became powerful and he began to harass the rulers of Trichinopoly and Madura. Chanda Saheb, the son-in-law of the Nawab of Arcot, Dost Ali, captured Trichinopoly and Madura by defeating Nayak rulers in 1739 A.D. Thereupon, the helpless Nayak rulers asked for help, against these atrocities, from Raja Shahu.

It is said that the great Maratha invasion of the Karnatak in 1740 was instigated by, among other factors, to place Bangaru Timmala (the father of the adopted son of Rani Minakshi of Trichinopoly, who had committed suicide) on the Nayak Throne. Raghuji Bhonsle, the leader of the Maratha army directed MurarRao Ghorpade who was made the governor of Trichinopoly to place Bangaru on the Nayak Throne. When Nizam-ul-Mulk came down to the south and seized Trichinipoly in 1743, Bangaru sought Maratha assistance, but in vain. With him disappeared the last vestige of Hindu rule in the south. (Majumdar, A.C., op.cit., pp.342-313).

15. Grant Duff took the figures from the Maratha MSS. They differ from those given by Orme and other writers.

and Sardeshmukhi from the Mughal Talukas which were under the control of Mantri and Sumant. It was also ordered that public should not be harassed in any way. (16).

The province of Karnatak was assigned to Fateh Singh Bhonsle for management. More Sardars were needed for establishing Maratha supremacy there. Therefore, Balaji Vishwanath, Senapati Khanderao Dabhade and Santaji Bhonsle (Son of Parsoji Bhonsle), and Panwar Vishwasrao were sent along with Fateh Singh with fifteen thousand troops. Baji Rao Pradhan, Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhonsle, the Sena Saheb Subah And Sarlashkar were called with their armies and were ordered to proceed alongwith Fateh Singh (17). Shahu Sent a letter to Sena Saheb Subah commanding him to join hands with Fateh Singh. (18) But Raghuji could not comply with Shahu's orders at once, as he had to make arrangement for his Saranjami also before leaving for Karnatak. Thereupon,

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16. Kavya Itihas Sangraha-Thoreley Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra, p.37.

17. Kavya Itihas Sangraha-6, Malharrao Chitnis Virachit-p,49.

18. The letter is as follows:- "Come with an army of fifteen thousand and join hands with Baji Rao in constituting the front flank of the army. Join Fateh Singh at Chandi-chandavar, who had been sent there by Shahu, You should help Fateh Singh in punishing the enemy, Chanda Saheb, who is harassing the relatives of Shahu. "After making arrangement for the management of his Mamlat, Raghuji after passing through Nanded and Vasumati, proceeded towards Hyderabad along with his Sardars, Raghuji Karande and Krishnaji Atole etc., and met Fateh Singh at Chandavar. (S.P.D, XXVIII, 8.)

Shahu sent him a letter full of scolding. (19) Later on Purandare informed Baji Rao that Fateh Singh and Raghuji had started for the south. Both had come out of Satara. These two, Pant Pratinidhi and Ghorpade, all had gone to Sagar province on their way to Karnatak.

After the death in 1732 of Sadaatullah Khan, who was one of the best rulers of his time, his nephew Dost Ali succeeded him. On hearing of Raghuji's intended invasion Dost Ali at once took steps to save the Karnatak. He chose a strong position on the Damalcherry pass to the north of river Pone. He had with him only ten thousand troops, but he trusted to the difficulty of the country and sent pressing orders to his son Safdar Ali and to his son-in-law, Chanda Saheb, to hasten to his help. Safdar Ali however, was engaged in a distant expedition, while Chanda Saheb was unwilling to leave Trichinopoly, which he had recently acquired from the widow of its hereditary governor by an act of gross treachery. Dost Ali was thus doomed to face the Maratha army only with the troops by him.

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19. "In Karnatak province and in Hindustan the enemies are creating troubles. To counteract all these troubles Shinde Holkar, Vithal Shivdev, Umdat-ul-mulk Bahadur, Naro Shanker, Raja Bahadur, Antaji Mankeshwar and Govind Ballal Bundele etc. Sardars have been sent alongwith Pant Pradhan. In the same way I had asked you to proceed to Karnatak with your army for the help of Fateh Singh there. But you replied that you were busy with your own Saranjami. You are one of my Sardars so you should have acted according to my orders and would have helped me in the management of the kingdom. But what more should I say? You are the right hand of the Swami. Uptil now you have protected the Kingdom and in future also you have to handle all such situations. Do what is proper and right. In spite of being an expert politician, you are not giving due importance to this matter. March there and start the war. All Sardars are under you." (Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.VI, No. 149).

The army which entered the Karnatak under the command of Raghuji (20) was composed of troops belonging to the Raja, the Peshwa, Pratinidhi, Fateh Singh and various Chiefs of less note (21). They entered the Karnatak, plundered many towns and reached Golcunda. The army under Fateh Singh plundered some villages of Aurangabad. Therefore, Nasir Jang also set out with an army from Aurangabad and wanted to meet and confer with his friend Baji Rao. The Nawab of Arcot posted guards at all the passes to intercept the Maratha advance (22).

A force of Maratha cavalry, forty or fifty thousand strong, advanced upon Kandanur. Fateh Singh and Raghuji had exacted from the Nawab of Kandanur sixty thousand rupees and two elephants, but not being satisfied, had indulged in plunder. Morar Rao Ghorpade had plundered many villages near Raichur. Then they marched against Guddapah, where a day's fighting ensued between the Marathas and a body of cavalry led by Abd-un-Nabikhan, in which the latter fared ill. Then the Marathas moved in the direction of the pass, with a view to descending into the plains. But Nawab Dost Ali Khan and Mir Asad marched with all their troops and cavalry to oppose the further progress of the enemy. The Nawab ordered his baggage and artillery to march out of Arcot. The Nizam had sent forward a body of forty or fifty thousand

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20. The Peshwa had wanted that Chimnaji Appa might lead the expedition to the Karnatak instead of Fateh Singh Bhonsle. But Shahu asked Raghuji to lead the expedition.(Rajwade, V.K. Lekh Sangraha, Part I, p.144).

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21. Duff Grant, op.cit.,/p.420.

22. Dodwell, H. A Calendar of Madras Records- No.71, dated 24th Feb. 1740 (1740-1744).

cavalry and he followed it with twenty thousand more horsemen and the advanced force of cavalry had approached the pass. Hasan Ali Khan and Taqi Saheb were guarding the pass with two thousand mounted men. The Nawab had sent Ajit Singh with seven hundred horse to Damalcherry. Nasir Jang had arrived with fifty thousand men at Kulbarga and stayed there for four months. (23) Safdar Ali Khan, with two thousand cavalry marched from the south towards Arcot and was thence to move on to the pass. On May 6, Safdar Ali arrived at La-lenpettai. Chanda Saheb reached Manuspetta with five thousand horse and moved northward. Mir Asad etc., had breached the 'Pelic tank' to distress the Marathas for lack of water. Some Marathas had advanced by the Guvalcherum pass which Abdul Nabi who had made peace with the Marathas for two lakh of rupees and two elephants, had opened. Others stayed at Chengamore, Nellore and Todpatni, but their Commander-in-chief lay with fifteen thousand horse at Hussanapuram. It was believed that Nasir Jang, who was going there to demand six years tribute amounting to sixty lakh of rupees, had proposed their inroad.(24)

The Nawab with his artillery and troops took possession of the heights and awaited the attack. One division of the Nawab's troops and his artillery were posted in the pass and the rest were in reserve. The Marathas, making a movement to the rear, surroun-

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23. Pillai, Ananda Ranga, The Private Diary, vol. I,pp,118 to 120; Dodwell, H., op.cit., No.133.

24. Dodwell, H., op.cit., No.136.

ded the position, and began to harass the Nawab's forces. The Marathas attacked the Pass with ten thousand men and sent another ten thousand along a difficult and thorny passage to the eastward under the guidance of Chicka Rayalu, Raja of Punganur. So they attacked the Nawab's advanced body in front and his reserve in plank. They had four thousand musketeers, who fired after the European manner, killed Nawab Dost Ali Khan, Hussain Ali Khan- his son and Johar Khan and others. Mir Asad and Taqi Saheb etc. were wounded. The Nawab's army was scattered and his Dewan Mir Asad was taken prisoner. This happened on May 20, 1740 (25). The Marathas then plundered the Mughal Camp and Bhaskar Rao and others pursued Safdar Ali Khan upto Vellore. Bhaskar Rao stayed at Manipet with four thousand horse.(26).

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25. Dodwell, H., op.cit., No.135- Reports the deaths of Nawab Dost Ali Khan, his son Hussain Ali Khan and other persons in the engagement with the Marathas at the pass of the hills between Arcot and Cuddapah on May 9, 1740.

26. Records of Fort St. George- Military Department Country correspondence, Vol.I, pp.26-29; Pillai, A.R.,op.cit.,Vol.I,pp.125-126. It is stated that when Dost Ali encountered Marathas at the pass of Damalcherry, the Marathas offered to settle their demands by negotiation, but the Nawab could not accept a compromise so a stiff and prolonged fight ensued in which Dost Ali and others lost their lives. (Sardesai,G.S., op.cit.,Vol.II, p.253).

Col. G.B.Malleson writes that, "Early on May 19,1740, the Marathas pressed through a george to the south of Dost Ali's camp and attacked him in front, flank and rear. In a few hours the Mohammedan army was totally destroyed and Dost Ali lay dead in the field. The Maratha army met Dost Ali and his troop at the Damalcherry pass on May 19, 1740 (it is about 70 miles north-north-west of Madras). The Nawab and his younger son were killed in the battle and the whole Muslim army was put to route. The slaughter was unprecedented even in that age. No route could have been move complete)". (History of the French in India,p.79).

According to Malleson,Dost Ali was deceived by his Hindu Commander, who was guarding the key position and who deserted to the enemy. He permitted the Maratha army to march through the george he was guarding on the night of May 19, 1740.

The account of this defeat spread dismay and consternation in the Karnatak. The Marathas had completely defeated the actual rulers of the country - the allies and protectors of the French. Hearing of this disaster, Chanda Saheb fortified himself in Trichinopoly and Safdar Ali retired to Arcot. Both entrusted their families and their valuables to Dumas, the French governor of Pondicherry. Raghuji after this victory plundered a vast stretch of the country. They plundered Canjivaram and Porto Novo, Ambur, Vaniyambadi etc. The Marathas consisting of five thousand horsemen marched under the command of Fateh Singh to Trinvamamalai and raided the surrounding country. They afterwards dispersed in small detachments of from fifty to one hundred horsemen and began plundering Vellimedic, Tridivanam, Kalasapakham and other places. News of this pillaging was constantly brought by the inhabitants who fled from their homes. The number of persons who took refuge in Cuddalore was very great (27).

Meanwhile the Marathas, taking advantage of this victory had marched upon Arcot and had occupied it without opposition.(28) They realised nearly two and a half lakh of rupees Khandani captured one hundred elephants and three thousand horses. Thence they sent detachments to pillage the country. Mir Asad Ali was liberated. He was the bitter enemy of Chanda Saheb. He had easily convinced Safdar Ali that the sacrifice of Chanda Saheb would heighten the conditions likely to be imposed upon himself. This being

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27. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol. I, pp.134-135.

28. Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol. VI, p.32.

agreed upon as a basis, negotiations were opened and after a short interval, a treaty was signed in the month of August, 1740, between Safdar Ali and the Marathas(29). Accordingly the Marathas at once retired from the Karnatak and went two hundred and fifty miles towards Maharashtra.

For making this secret pact with Safdar Ali, the independent conduct of Raghuji was criticised by Venkaji Shivdeo the agent of the Peshwa in the Karnatak. He informed the Peshwa of the terms of negotiations settled between Safdar Ali Khan; the Nawab of Arcot and Raghuji, without the knowledge of Fateh Singh. Even Ramaji Pant had joined Raghuji in this pact. Therefore, he requested the Peshwa to chastise Raghuji even with the assistance of the Nizam-ul-Mulk if need be, and thus teach him a good lesson for his imprudent conduct. He accused Raghuji of false talks, back-biting and of some underhand dealings about money matters. Hence there was a loss of eighteen lakh of rupees revenue of Arcot and twenty two lakhs loss of revenue of Trichinopoly. Raghuji and Safdar Ali had become one and they did not give a chance to Fateh Singh to fight and both the parties were not on a speaking terms.

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29. According to the treaty, it was decided that Safdar Ali should be recognised as the Nawab of Karnatak in place of his father, that he should pay by instalments ten million rupees to the Marathas, that he should join his troops with those of the Marathas, to drive out Chanda Saheb from Arcot, and that all the Hindu princes and landlords on the coromandal coast should be reinstated in possession of the places they had held prior to 1736 A.D. As a result of this, Pratap Singh was made the ruler of Tanjore. The article concerning Chanda Saheb was kept a secret (Malleson, G.B., op.cit., p.83; Duff , Grant, op.cit., Vol I pp.420-421; Orme, Robert, op.cit., pp.42-43; S.P.D. XX, 21; Sardesai, G.S. op.cit., Vol.II, p.254; Dodwell, H., op.cit., No. 150).

It was agreed that if Trichinopoly could be captured, then it should be given to Safdar Ali and the fort of Chandi, if captured should be in Raghuji's possession. The expenditure of the army would amount to nearly four lakh of rupees per month. The ruler of Arcot had agreed to send infantry consisting of ten thousand troops and five big artilleries. In Chanda, Raghuji had established his posts, whereas Fateh Singh had not succeeded. If the Nizam could start immediately and reach Advani in time, then Raghuji could be taken prisoner very easily, and only then he could be taught a lesson. Otherwise it would become very difficult to remove Raghuji from there and he might become more impertinent (30). Thus, the attitude of Raghuji was extremely defiant, setting at naught the authority of the Peshwa and Fateh Singh Bhonsle. As a shrewd and clever politician Raghuji, however, made common cause with the Hindu Rajas and he was joined by Pratap Singh of Tanjore with whatever forces he could get together. Two agents of Pratap Singh, Timaji Ranganath and Gangappa, visited Raghuji and formed a compact with him to capture Trichinopoly, remove Chanda Saheb and Pratap Singh would readily give fifteen lakhs in cash, three lakhs of which would be personal nazar to Raja Shahu, two lakhs to his Ranis, two lakhs to Fateh Singh and Raghuji and eight lakhs for the expenses of the troop. This happened on January 16, 1741 (31). According to the agreement Pratap Singh sent fifteen lakh of rupees to Shahu as Nazar.

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30. S.P.D.XX, 21; S.P.D. XXV, 9.

31. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.255.

While Safdar Ali and Chanda Saheb were at Arcot in apparent friendliness, Mir Asad, who was with the Marathas in the Western Karnatak, concluded a treaty with the Marathas by which Chanda Saheb was to pay seven lakh of rupees as compensation for Trichinopoly. But Chanda Saheb resented this, left Arcot, hastened to Trichinopoly and provisioned it for a seige. It is believed that this was done only to destroy Chanda Saheb, that the Marathas were promised a monthly sum till Trichinopoly was taken, and that they were furnished with provisions. Tanjore and Hindu princes tributary to Trichinopoly assisted the Marathas on condition that Trichinopoly should not be left in Mohammedan hands (32). The Mysoreans offered fifty lakh of rupees to the Marathas if they would kill or imprison Chanda Saheb and restore Hindu rule at Trichinopoly (33). It was thought that their expedition against Trichinopoly was instigated by Mir Asad who with Safdar Ali was

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32. Public Despatches to England, Vol.XIII, pp.3 to 70. Great uncertainty prevailed as to what the Marathas would do. One view was that the Hindu Chiefs and the Tanjore Raja who assisted the Marathas stipulated that Trichinipoly should not be left in Muslim hands. Both the English and French letters graphically describe the anarchy prevailing in the country and the poverty and impotence of Nawab Safdar Ali. Murar Rao, who was left incharge of Trichinipoly till he was forced by Nizam-ul-Mulk to evacuate it in the latter part of 1743.

33. Dodwell, H., op.cit., 1740-1744, No.443.

the mortal enemy of Chanda Saheb (34).

The treaty between Safdar Ali and the Marathas was made ostensibly to invade the province, but actually to unite with Safdar Ali in destroying Chanda Saheb who was of course expected to take the field in the general cause of Islam. But Chanda Saheb had no idea of a second Maratha inroad. So he felt extremely alarmed when he received the news of this secret agreement. He lost no time in seeking the help of the French in this hour of need (35). He was a man of energy, had spent the interval by strengthening its fortifications, and in storing up large quantities of grain. So ready was he for the Maratha onset that Raghuji gave up the idea of storming Trichinopoly and adopted with success a trick that should not have deceived a man of Chanda Saheb's capacity. He gave out that the campaign had been a great financial loss and that weary of the Karnatak, he would return to the western Deccan. He gave colour to this statement by retreating to Shevganga (some eighty miles south of Trichinopoly). Chanda Saheb, thinking that the Marathas had left for good, sold

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34. Ibid., No. 51. According to historian Mark Wilks, Safdar Ali and Mir Asad, the Diwan of the Nawab, had secretly invited the Marathas; but the defeat and death of Dost Ali in the pass of Damalcheny failed their plan by which the invaders were to have, by passed the Nawab quietly and made an attack on Chanda Saheb at Trichinopoly. On his father's death Safdar Ali shut himself up in Vellore, negotiated with the invaders through Mir Asad and got a secret understanding with them by which they were to get a large portion of the dominions under Chanda Saheb as the price of his effectual removal from the country. (Majumdar, R.C., op.cit., p.313).

35. This is indeed the first example of European powers directly interfering in Indian Politics.

his store of grain and sent his brother Bara Saheb with ten thousand of his men to invade Madura in spite of repeated instructions from Dumas (36). Directly Raghuji heard that Chanda Saheb had fallen into his trap, he hastened by forced marches to Trichinopoly and began the siege (37), before Chanda Saheb had had time to replenish his empty grainaries. Safdar Ali sent his army to help the Marathas. Though taken by surprise Chanda Saheb decided to defend himself with resolution. He summoned Bara Saheb, who at the head of three thousand horse and seven thousand foot, marched towards Trichinopoly. The Marathas, however, had knowledge of all his movements and on his approaching to within about fifteen miles of the city, they detached a superior force amounting to about twenty thousand men to intercept him. A desperate encounter ensued. Bara Saheb fighting with all the energy of despair, was killed, and his followers atonce gave way. The Maratha leader had clad the body of Bara Saheb in rich clothes and sent it to Trichinopoly, that Chanda Saheb might learn from it. In spite of this disaster, Chanda Saheb defended himself bravely from Dec. 15, 1740 to March 21, 1941. When his ammunition and stores had been

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36. It seemed that Dumas had also received intelligence of the secret clause of the treaty between Safdar Ali and the Marathas. So he was aware of the dangers from the side of the Marathas. (Martineau Correspondence III, p.236; Malleson, G.B., op. cit., p.89).

37. S.P.D. XX, 21.

exhausted, he had no alternative but to surrender (38). Chanda Saheb was taken prisoner and was sent to Satara fort, where he remained in the custody of an agent of Raghuji for about seven years. Murar Rao Ghorpade, a great nephew of the famous Santaji Ghorpade, was appointed to hold Trichinopoly with a garrison of fourteen thousand men, and was ordered to defend it at any cost. (39). It was really a grand success for the Marathas, as Maratha supremacy was established over the Karnatak (40). Then Marathas returned in two armies; forty thousand horse took the western route through Mysore, the rest passed by Gingee and crossed the Kistna about the end of May. Safdar Ali first moved to Vellore and then to Arcot. He also removed his family

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38. According to Orme, Chanda Saheb delivered up the city of Trichinopoly and himself on March 26, 1741. Though the Madras Records (No. 283) mention the 23rd as the date of its fall. Pillai relates under the date March 27, 1941, how his younger brother Bara Saheb, who was incharge of Madura and was advancing to the relief of Trichinopoly with provision and troops was intercepted near Dindigal by a Maratha attack and later routed and killed at Mamaparai in the battle by Raghuji. (Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol. I, p.159).

39. Raghuji had negotiated with Kamanayya and Govindanyya with a view to restoring the old Hindu family. But as they declined due to the fear of the Mughal, Murar Rao was appointed its killedar. (Madras Public Consultations Vol.71, pp. 133-134).

40. S.P.D. XX, 21-22; Rajwade, op.cit., VI, 149; Purandare Diary in Rajwade, op.cit., VI gives detail of this episode. Aitihasik Patravayavahar, 26.

from Pondicherry to Vellore (41), because the Marathas were intending to attack the sea ports. Although Chanda Saheb had agreed to pay a ransom of eight lakh of rupees (42) for the release of himself and of his son, yet his wife at Pondicherry insisted on his being released before any money was paid. But Raghuji refused this plea and Chanda Saheb and his son were carried to Satara (43).

In all these transactions, Pratap Singh did not show any keen interest, and refrained from cooperating with his own

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41. Orme, Robert, op.cit., p.43; Dodwell, H., op.cit., 1740-1744, Nos. 11 and 50.

    Pillai gives a different account of the storming of Trichinopoly and of capturing Chanda Saheb. He writes, "on Saturday the March 25, Raghuji directed the Poligars, the Kollar of the Moravan Tondiman, and the Pindaries, to scale walls of the fort at Trichinopoly and they did so simultaneously from all quarters. Chanda Saheb, who was beseiged there, seeming that his life would be in danger if he remained any longer, treated for terms, through the medium of a Pathan nobleman. He agreed to pay a sum of twelve lakh of rupees to the Marathas, on condition that he should be allowed to retire in safety. At midnight of the same day, he repaired to the Maratha camp outside the fort, together with his son 'Abid Saheb' his son-in-law Khan Bahadur and Sharif Saheb. When Raghuji met these four individuals, he said nothing, but disarmed and kept them in honourable custody in his camp. The fort of Trichinopoly was occupied by the Mahrattas and their standard was hoisted there. (Pillai Diary- Vol.I, pp.161-162. Madras Records mention that when provision ran short, Chanda Saheb offered the Marathas twelve lakhs, but the negotiations broke off. (No.283), and Trichinopoly was surrendered on March 13th, 1741 (No. 105).

42. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.III, pp. 2 and 4.

43. Raghuji was in sore need of money at Trichinopoly and for that purpose demanded a heavy ransom for Chanda Saheb and his son Abid Ali, who were prisoners in his hands. They were unable to pay this huge amount and Raghuji who knew it too well how dangerous it was to leave this willy, politician free to pursue his never ending intrigues, at once despatched the prisoners to Satara under close guard of his capable captain Bhaskar Rao. His family escaped this fate as they had been already removed to French protection at Pondicherry.

kinsmen in their victorious activities. It may be that he feared the attempt of Raghuji as one undertaken for the complete subjugation of south India and the imposition of Shahu's suzerainty. In that case he would have had to lose his independence and merge his kingdom into the larger and more powerful confederacy (44). Moreover, there was little love lost between Pratap Singh and Murar Rao, as a result of which an understanding developed between the latter and the French and the Tanjore kingdom was subjected to the relentless depredations carried out systematically by the Maratha adventure.

The seige of Trichinopoly by Raghuji and Fateh Singh was reported to Shahu. It was also reported to him that one lakh or one and a half lakh army had been stationed there after its capture (45). Raghuji and Fateh Singh had to face many difficulties in this campaign.(46).

After the capture of Trichinopoly, Raghuji attacked regions upto Madura and established the Maratha authority there. Many skirmishes took place between the Nawab of Arcot and the Marathas. The province of Madura remained for many days under Mohammad Ali, the Nawab of Arcot. Fateh Singh had rendered much help to Raghuji in these compaigns of Karnatak. For this in

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44. The selfish policy of Pratap Singh is so very patent, and his non-cooperation reflects the separatist policy or attitude that had taken a deep root in the Maratha principality of the south.

45. S.P.D.New Series- No.54.

46. S.P.D. XX,20; S.P.D. XXVIII, 9.

1741 A.D. Raghuji gave to Fateh Singh the Saranjami and Deshmukhi of Kadevalit and three villages in Mokasa as Inam. That was a very old Saranjami which was given to Raghuji by Shahu (47) for enjoying the Mokasa of Varhad (48).

Shahu personally took no interest in Chanda Saheb beyond insisting that Trichinopoly should be permanently transferred to the Maratha rule. The performance of Raghuji and of Fateh Singh gave them a high place in public estimation among the Marathas. It brought in large funds (49). The two heroes of the Karnatak were received by Shahu at Satara with much honour (50), although Shahu had planned to go upto Pandharpur to receive them (51). He conferred the Mokasa of Berar and Gondwana upon Raghuji upto the territory of Cuttack (52). He also honoured Raghuji with valuable clothes. Shahu was highly gratified that his cousin Pratap Singh of Tanjore was freed from the danger of his enemies. According to the agreement Pratap Singh also sent fifteen lakh of rupees to Shahu as Nazar. Peshwa also met Raghuji after his coming back from the Karnatak (53).

In this invasion, the army procured a rich loot, captured

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47. Nagpurkar Bhonslyanchi Kagad Patra Lekhsangraha-dated 3.2.1741. (Aitihasik Patra Lekh-1).
48. Unpublished papers.
49. But as V.K.Rajwade aptly remarks:- "Although they had brought in large funds, but the rivers of gold from Hindustan and the Karnatak only served to enrich his army leaders and disappeared before they reached the Maratha country." (op.cit., vol.VI, p.267).
50. Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.VI, p.44.
51. Vaidya Daftar Papers- Vol.III, No.43 (Edited by S.L.Vaidya)
52. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.257, unpublished papers.
53. Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.VI, p.55.

a good place and collected Khandanya from place to place, and brought in two drums and Paday (पाडाव), one of which was with Raghuji and the other was sent to Krishnaji Atole.

SECTION - II

The Question of the Subedari of the Karnatak

After getting a strong foothold in the Karnatak by the Maratha victories at Trichinopoly and Arcot, the question arose as to who should get the Subedari of the Karnatak? Mainly three parties were involved in the Karnatak affairs (a) Babuji Naik, (b) Raghuji Bhonsle and (c) the Peshwa. They were anxious for a share in the affairs of the Karnatak and were planning for securing the Mamlat of the same (54). Shahu had wanted to settle the disputes between Raghuji and Fateh Singh and for this purpose he had asked the Peshwa to clear up all those matters in his declining days.(55)

The situation became more complicated in the Karnatak due to the hostile activities of Raghuji, the interference of the Peshwa in the policies of the Karnatak, and the checking of Raghuji's activities by the Nizam and Fateh Singh, Babuji Naik's plan for the

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54. Vaidya Daftar, Vol. IV, No. 18.

55. Ibid., No.35.

possession of the Karnatak and the intrigues of Shahu's queens (56). Fateh Singh and Babuji Naik made concerted efforts to secure the Karnatak for themselves (57). Shahu's queen's planned to assign the province of Karnatak to Fateh Singh and to Raghuji, depriving Babuji Naik of the same (58). Shahu's younger queen Sagunabai was paying special attention to Raghuji, because she was his sister-in-law. There she tried to secure the Karnatak for Raghuji. If Shahu would have agreed to that, then there would have been great difficulty in managing the affairs of the Karnatak. Shahu's elder queen Sakwarbai was also fostering intrigues in this matter,(59) she was supporting the Peshwa and Sadashivrao Bhau. But her main problem was money, so she took some loan from Babuji Naik. But her plan was foiled by the younger queen Sagunabai (60). Some influential Maratha Sardars were of the opinion that the Karnatak should be allotted to Raghuji. If Raghuji went there and took interest in the Karnatak affairs, then it would be better. Therefore, Purandare wrote to the Peshwa and Sadashivrao Bhau that they should see the queen Sakwarbai personally and should influence her, becauseshe was not supporting the cause of Raghuji. She could raise the taxes for repaying the debt of Babuji Naik, who was an influential person. So this important matter should be tackled personally, tactfully and cautiously (61).

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56. S.P.D.XXVIII, 57.
57. Ibid., 56.
58. Ibid., 34.
59. S.P.D.VIII, 63.
60. Ibid., XXVIII, 3.
61. Kavya Itihas Sangraha No. 82.

Due to the intrigues of Babuji Naik, Fateh Singh, Raghuji and the influence of the Peshwa for securing the Mamlat of the Karnatak for themselves, Shahu and Fateh Singh made a plan for the division of the Karnatak. The coveteous eyes of Raghuji and Babuji Naik were in the same region. Raghuji tried his best to secure the Mamlat of the Karnatak for himself, but his efforts were fruitless. Then Raghuji suggested that for realising the taxes, Babuji Naik should be sent to the Karnatak and he and Babuji Naik should get the subedaries of Bengal and of the Karnatak respectively. Fateh Singh tried for the support of the Peshwa for securing the Karnatak for himself. So he expressed his full confidence in the Peshwa and his readiness to act upon the latter's advice (62).

Due to this Karnatak affair, the court of Satara became so full of intrigues and party politics, that everyone was trying to keep the Karnatak under his control with the help of his or her supporters at the Satara court. Sadashivrao Bhau wrote to Purandare that this party politics at Satara should be brought to an end (63). Bhau suggested to Purandare that for this purpose Raghuji should be kept pleased, otherwise he would create troubles in Fateh Singh's sphere(64), which could bring dissension among the Sardars (65).

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62. S.P.D.XXVIII, 58.
63. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, No.71.
64. Originally the Karnatak had been Fateh Singh's sphere, but there was some conspiracy for involving Raghuji in the Karnatak politics. If Shahu would have favoured Raghuji, then there would have been great difficulty in managing the affairs of the Karnatak.
65. Kavya Itihas Sangraha No.74.

At last Shahu gave the sanad of the Karnatak to Babuji Naik, fixed the annual payments to be made to the government. The Karnatak was one of Shahu's personal estates (66). Due to this arrangement,however, conflicts arose between Raghuji, Babuji Naik and Fateh Singh,(67) and Raghuji came in the field (68). Some internal intrigues were also going on for atopping Babuji Naik from taking charge of the Karnatak. For this purpose Sadashivrao Bhau was specially sent to the Karnatak. The Nawab of Savnoor was also ~~akso~~ in favour of Babuji Naik, but at the same time he was trying to please the other party also (69). Babuji Naik established his camp at Saro province and with the help of Nasir Jang he was trying to attack Bidnoor and Savnoor (70).

Formerly Raghuji had supported Babuji Naik in securing the robes of the Peshwa, but he was unsuccessful in his attempt. Afterwards when Babuji Naik got the Mamlat of the Karnatak, then Raghuji became an opponent of Babuji Naik. In his heart Raghuji was determined to make him a beggar. Due to intrigues of all these three parties, the situation in the Karnatak was particularly confusing. Ram Chandra had wanted that Babuji Naik should be satisfied and

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66. S.P.D.XXXX, 28; S.P.D.,XXV, 42.
67. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, Malharrao Chitnis Virachit, p.84.
68. Ibid., No.47.
69. Ibid., No.60.
70. Ibid., No.62.

won him over by giving him three or four lakh of rupees. He also suggested to the Peshwa that Safdar Ali should be influenced and included in their party and he should be prevented from giving any sort of help to Raghuji (71). On the other hand Raghuji was thinking of getting some money from Dabhade for the fulfilment of his plans (72). Fateh Singh and his lieutenants, Trimbak Hari and Darkoji, were advancing with their armies towards the Karnatak. They also realised that Raghuji should be kept satisfied, otherwise he would create difficulties for them in their campaign (73). Purandare wrote to the Peshwa that he should personally negotiate with Babuji Naik for the settlement of the Karnatak affair and should see that he was satisfied. If Tarabai interfered in the Karnatak affairs, then it should not be neglected to all (74).

For sometime Babuji Naik obtained from Shahu the field of the Karnatak for himself, but he too was unable to accomplish any tangible results owing to the opposition of the Peshwa and he himself lacked the quality of handling a situation tactfully, and with valour and strength. Nago Ram informed Sadashivrao Bhau that Babuji Naik and Abaji Naik had failed miserably in the Karnatak, and had been dismissed by the Nizam. So being unsuccessful there, he came back (75). Murar Rao Ghorpade claimed the Karnatak for

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71. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, Malharrao Chitnis Virachit, No.67.
72. Ibid., No.70.
73. Ibid., No. 74.
74. Ibid., No.70.
75. B.P.D. XXV, 23.

himself. In the end the new Peshwa took charge of the Karnatak in 1746. He seized this opportunity to befriend Murar Rao and to oust Babuji Naik. So Babuji Naik was removed from the post of Subedar of the Karnatak, and appointed Sadashivrao Bhau in his place. For his help he sent Mahadaji Pant, to manage the affairs of the Karnatak (76). The whole subject, however, remained in abeyance for some two years more, owing to Shahu's death at the end of 1749 A.D. Later on the peace was restored in the Karnatak, as Sadashivrao Bhau hints in a letter that in the Karnatak they were successful. Everything was put in order and in favour of them. They and the Mughals were on good terms (77).

SECTION III

Raghuji's Relations with the French

With the defeat and death of Dost Ali and the capture of Trichinopoly, the French were placed in an embarassing situation, similar to that in 1677 A.D., after the defeat of Sher Khan Lody by Shivaji. Pondicherry in 1740 was in a much better position to offer resistence. But in spite of the sound defences of Pondicherry, Dumas, the French Governor of Pondicherry, was fully alive to the weaknesses of his position. But he resolved to prepare himself for any eventuality, and greatly strengthened the west

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76. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, No.99.

77. Ibid., No.75.

fortifications of Pondicherry.

Some information regarding the recent clauses of the treaty between Raghuji and Safdar Ali had reached Dumas and he did not fail to take advantage of it. He had already been threatened by Raghuji, not intending at all to accommodate matters, which had ensued between them. Dumas had been asked to pay tribute, which he had refused (78). To make the matters worse for the French, the widow of Dost Ali, with her children and treasure, arrived before the gate of Pondicherry and begged admission into the French stronghold (May 25, 1740). For Dumas to open the gates to the distinguished visitors meant invoking the wrath of the Marathas, who then would most certainly attack the French settlement. To refuse an entry to the family of the Nawab was likely to prove equally dangerous. By the force of events the Marathas retired into their country. Safdar Ali who had every chance of succeeding his father as the Nawab of Karnatak, would never have forgiven the French for refusing shelter to his mother and his family. On weighing the pros and cons of the situation, Dumas came to the conclusion that it was preferably to incur the wrath of the Marathas rather than see his nation suffer disgrace in the eyes of the Indian people for denying admission to the family of the Nawab, who had always friendly relations with the French, and so he offered them the shelter (79). Safdar Ali in a

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78. Malleson, G.B., History of the Frenchin India, p.83

79. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, p.50; Lettres Edifiantes, VIII pp. 183-184; Pillai; A.R.Vol.I, p.126; Malleson,G.B. op.cit., pp.83-84.

letter to the French Governor (July 8) thanked him for the kindness shown to his mother and family (80).

Dumas had definite information that the Marathas would make their appearance again in the Karnatak immediately after the rains. He, therefore, worked ceaselessly on the fortifications and provisioning of the settlement and helped Chanda Saheb in his preparations for defending his capital. He had also enquired about the conditions prevailing at Trichinopoly (81).

Whilst engaged in the seige of Trichinopoly, Raghuji had started correspondence with Dumas. In his letter dated January 10, 1741, the Maratha general complained that the French Governor had failed to give a reply to several letters he had written to him, this negligence had led him to believe that the French were supplying men and material to the enemies of the Marathas. He had, therefore, planned to send an army against the French settlement. But on the recommendations of Appaji Vithal, son of Vithal Nagarath, assuring him that the French were a trustworthy people, he had deferred action against them (82).

Raghuji reminded Dumas that the French had been confirmed in their settlement by Shivaji and as such owed him a

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80. Ibid., pp.54-55; Pillai, A.R. op.cit., Vol. I, p.125.
81. Ibid., pp. 210 and 240; Letters at Conventions, p.270; Pillai A.R., op.cit., Vol. I, p.127.
82. Dodwell, H., op.cit., No.17, dated January 13, 1741.

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tribute which now amounted to sixty lakh of rupees (83). In his letter of January 22, 1741, Raghuji pressed for his claims for the tribute and in addition demanded the surrender of the family of Chanda Saheb lodged in safety behind the walls of Pondicherry. He also asked for the treasure that the family of Chanda Saheb had brought with them. The French settlement was threatened with the fate of Bassein, (84) recently captured by the Marathas from the Protuguese.

In his reply Dumas repudiated the claim of the Marathas to any tribute from the French Governor, declared that the French were under the protection of the king of France, and as such all the Frenchmen in India would rather die than deliver the family of Chanda Saheb to their enemies. The letter concluded with a report that Bassein was not defended by Frenchmen, that if the Marathas attacked Pondicherry, the French would try to deserve their esteem as the bravest nation in the world.

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83. Dodwell, H., op.cit., No.36, dated January 26, 1741. It is true that Shivaji had granted a firman to the French in June 1677, confirming them in their settlement at Pondicherry and that from that time onwards the French owed allegiance to the Marathas. But Raghuji overlooked the fact, perhaps deliberately, that Pondicherry had been sold to the Dutch by Raja Ram in August 1693. The French subsequently recovered Pondicherry from the Dutch, but the Marathas had no longer any claims upon the French. Raghuji suggested that the French Governor should utilise the presence of Vithal Nagrath in Pondicherry for preliminary discussions. He further advised Dumas to send a Vakil to the Maratha Camp to settle the amount of the tribute.

84. Letters at Conventions, pp. 156-161, edited by A.Martineau; Martineau, A, correspondence, III, pp.235-236; Malleson,G.B. op.cit., pp. 85 to 87.

On February 3, 1741, the French Governor received another letter from Raghuji, in which the previous demands were reiterated. Raghuji replied to Dumas in the following words- "you say that your country produces only soldiers and iron, but remember that we have with us hammers and steel implements, whereby that iron of yours would be treated in the furnace and reduced to powder." The letter terminated with the advice to the French Governor to send a Vakil to the Maeatha camp so that all points of dispute could be settled in an amicable manner. Not content with this, he despatched his own envoy, Gopal Anand to Pondicherry with full powers to negotiate with the French Governor (85).

The seige of Trichinopoly prevented Raghuji from giving effect to his threats against the French settlement. He despatched a force of about fifteen thousand men to beat up the coast. They marched against Porto Novo, used in those days as a depot by the European settlers. They ransacked the Dutch factory at Porto Novo. The French lost goods worth about 3,900 pagodas. Raghuji was there with forty thousand horse (86). The Maratha troops next moved to Cuddalpore (Cuddalore) an English settlement, twelve miles south of Pondicherry and pillaged it (87). They plundered Manjakuppam and wounded many. They were driven off by artillery fire and withdrew to Bahur. Then marching within five miles of the French

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85. Letters the Conventions, pp. 161-164; Martineau, A. Dupleix II, p.22. About Vithal Nagrath Dumas avoided dealing with him. (Pillai; A.R. op.cit., Vol.I, p.148).
86. Dodwell, H. op.cit., Nos. 11 and 449.
87. Ibid., Nos. 26 and 31.

settlement, they halted and sent threatening letters to Dumas; at the same time, they despatched small parties to ravage the country in the neighbourhood (88).

Immediately after the fall of Trichinopoly, Raghuji marched against Pondicherry. At the same time, in pursuance of advices received from Raghuji, an expedition was organised on the western coast to attack the French settlement of Mahe. The French were fully prepared for the coming onslaught. They continued with the same ardour the repair of the fortifications, and at the same time they created new defences. Precautions were taken against the Maratha attack upon Pondicherry. Two hundred French soldiers were sent to guard all the entrances to the town. The gates were all shut, with the exception of the wicket in the western one, through which alone people were allowed to pass in or out. The people being outside the ramparts were ordered by beat of tom-tom to come into the fort, and at six in the evening all the gates were shut. (89) The army was alerted to be on duty. The French moved the greater part of their property within Pondicherry.

Neither was Dumas appalled by these letters and threats, nor by the still more threatening visit of the one of the chief officers of the Maratha army sent to inform him that the fate of

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88. Martineau, A. Correspondence III, pp. 202-203; lettres Edifiantes, VIII, p.59; Pillai, A.R. op.cit., Vol.I,p.139; Malleson,G.B. op.cit., p.91, we can find detailed description of the Maratha ravages and atrocities in and around the French settlements in south India in Madras Records and Pillai Diary.

89. Pillai,A.R., op.cit., Vol.I, pp.121 and 139.

Trichinopoly was reserved for the French. But they did not close the channels of negotiations. In compliance with the wishes of Raghuji, Dumas had despatched his Vakil to the Maratha Camp,.with a view to impressing on the Maratha general the injustice of his demands. Nevertheless,the French were greatly surprised when a Maratha envoy arrived at Pondicherry with a 'Sarpech' for Dumas. The French gave a state reception to the Maratha envoy who had brought presents for Dumas. In fact the Maratha envoy was sent apparently to repeat the warnings that Dumas's letter had conveyed, but really to ascertain what it was upon which Dumas relied for a successful defence against such overwhelming odds. The envoy, on behalf of his master, assured the French Governor that, in consideration of the reputation the French had earned in India and the great esteem the Maratha General felt for him personally he had decided to renounce all his claims against the French and expressed his sincere desire to live in close amity with him. (90).

Dumas received the envoy with politeness, showed him his piles of stones, his ramparts bristling with guns, his French soldiers, and his drilled sepoys. He then told the envoy that so long as one Frenchman remained alive, the French flag would fly over Pondicherry. 'If your master' added Dumas, 'hopes to find in our town mines of gold and silver, tell him we have none. But it is rich in iron and that iron we are ready to use against all

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90. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, pp.239 to 241; Lettres Edifiants, VIII, p.198.

comers! To mark his goodwill he sent a dozen bottles of French liquor as a present to the Maratha General. The envoy left immediately impressed with the power and resources of the French settlement and with the firm attitude of its Governor. The General already informed of the military preparedness, was impressed by the valour of the French and won over by the golden produce of France's vine-yards. (91) The Marathas crossed the river Krishna in their anxiety to avoid the floods and the French agent returned to Pondicherry with the presents.(92). When Raghuji made peace

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91. Rajwade, op.cit., XV, 59; Parasnis, Itihas Sangraha, Peshwa Daftar, p.12.

92. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, p.241; Lettres Edifiants, VIII, p.198; Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.I,pp.166 to 171.

The French attributed this sudden change in the attitude of the Maratha General to the firm and resolute stand taken by Dumas in his negotiations with him, as well as to the good impressions made by the orderliness and discipline of the French soldiers on the Maratha officers that had been sent to Pondicherry to ascertain the strength and the preparations of the French settlement (Martineau, A., correspondence III, pp. 239 to 241).

Another version is that Dumas had very shrewdly despatched ten bottles of French liquor as a present to the Maratha general, who offered them to his wife. She liked it so much that she demanded more of it. Raghuji had already been impressed by his envoy's reports about French preparedness, he granted his wife's request and opened negotiations with the French Governor, while hinting at the excellence of French wines. Dumas caught the hint and despatched a further supply of thirty bottles to him. Raghuji was so highly pleased that he gave up his hostile attitude and withdrew all his demands. He forgot all his previous anger against the French. He prohibited any pillaging in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, and listened without anger to the reports that in attacking Pondicherry he had everything to lose and nothing to gain. He returned to Satara with his army impressed by the valour of the French and won over by "the golden produce of France's vineyards." The Nantes cordials had given the French an ally against whom he was but a child.

G.S.Sardesai, gives an interesting account of Raghuji's attack on Pondicherry and of the wine episode. (British Riyasat, pp. 473 to 476). Purandare Diary in V.K.Rajwade's Marathanchi

with the French and did not attack Pondicherry, he withdrew the expedition from the French settlement of Mahe also. It resolved itself into a blockade which lasted for eight months, when it was put to an end by Mde to Bourdonnais.

This incident reached Shahu's ears and shook his faith in Raghuji's integrity." धाकपाया राज्य बुडविले " was what Shahu said for Raghuji though with regret. The incident of the bottles of wine is referred to in a letter. (93) This would seem to hint at Raghuji having accepted the bottles of wine from the French, and would thus show that the King thus expressed his bitter

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Itihasanchi Sadhnen, Vol.VI, gives details of this Maratha expedition. Khare, V.D., Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.III, p.4439; Labernadie-Pondicherry, pp.59-60; Castornet des Fosses, L'Inde pp. 258-259; Malleson, G.B., op.cit., pp.92-93; Sardesai, G.S. Vol. II, p.254; Kincaid, C.A.Parasnis, D.B.,op.cit.,p.279.

93. Letter as follows:- "Balaji Peshwa had recently (1743) attacked and defeated Raghuji in Bengal. The Peshwa's enemies complained to Shahu against the growing influence of the Brahmins in the kingdom, observing that they had become so insolent as to attack Raghuji in person. The king burst into a fit of temper and said, "I would not mind even if they (Brahmin) kick me, but I cannot tolerate your shadow, you will ruin the kingdom by your thirst for wine." (Khare, V.D., op.cit., Vol.VIII, p.4439).

Accoruing to yet another source, Raghuji hastily concluded an honourable agreement with the French and returned to the Maratha capital, because of the rumour that the Nizam was contemplating an invasion of the Maratha territory. (Lettres Edifients, VIII, p.61; Martineau, A., Correspondence,V, p.124; Gastonent des Fosses, L. Inde, p.259.).

There could have been another cause also. In 1740, the Peshwa Bajirao died. Raghuji wished that the office of Peshwa should not be given to his son Nana Saheb. Because of this he came back to Satara from Karnatak. He convessed for Babuji Naik, because the late Peshwa had owed so much money to Babuji Naik, a money lender. But he was not successful in his effort. (Maratha Ani Angrez by Narsing Chintamani Kelkar, p.161, (Hindi translation).

resentment at the action of Raghuji in withdrawing from the Karnatak without reducing the French settlement.

Whatever the account of this story, its realistic side must not be lost sight of by historians. Dumas at Pondicherry was well equipped with men and material. In the extreme hour of difficulty he would have easily escaped into the sea with his wealth and women. Raghuji's attack would have been rendered ineffective if he had chosen to launch one. Raghuji was not slow to understand the power of the French. Weighing things in mind, Raghuji might have preferred an honourable retreat to a futile attack. The real cause, however, of the hasty withdrawl of the Maratha from the Karnatak may be traced in a letter to Nilkantha Raghunath, one of Raghuji's subordinates, from the Maratha camp at Kolar, to Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya at Satara dated April 26,1741, "unfortunately a severe attack of rheumatism has seized Raghuji since the capture of Trichinopoly. All kinds of remedies are being constantly tried, but they have so far failed to effect a cure. For sometime, even all hope of life was given up. During the last week, however, signs of improvement are distinctly visible." (94) In view of the serious condition of his health, it was not possible for Raghuji to continue the seige. He broke up his camp at Pondicherry and returned to Satara. Due to this illness Raghuji handed over the Fort of Trichinopoly after capturing it to Fateh Singh. Fateh Singh put it in the hands of Murar Rao Ghorpade, who was appointed its Killedar. (95).

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94. Sardesai, G.S., Modern Review, 1943, No. 74, p.449.
95. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.III, 1741 No.29.

This event greatly enhanced the reputation of Dumas. His defiance of the victorious Maratha army, led by the redoubtable Raghuji, earned him the reputation of a hero. Congratulations and thanks poured for him from all sides. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Subedar of Deccan, wrote a letter of thanks and sent him a dress of honour. Safdar Ali as a mark of esteem, sent him the armour of his deceased father. The Emperor of Delhi, Muhammad Shah, on hearing of this successful resistance to the Maratha presumption, conferred upon Dumas the rank and title of Nawab, with the rank of Mansabdar of 4,5000 horse. (96) After this he resigned and went to his native country. He was succeeded by Dupleix- an ambitious man. He decided to take the fullest advantage of the Deccan situation. It was in pursuance of this policy that Dupleix desired to revive French relations with Chanda Saheb. He advanced twenty thousand rupees from his private purse to finance Chanda Saheb's affair. (97) He had planned to instal that prince on the throne of Arcot with a view to receiving special advantages for the French. He thought that:-

(a) it would ensure greater security to French trade;

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96. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, pp.242 to 293; Lettres Edifiantes, VIII, p.60; Malleson, G.B., op.cit., p.93.

97. Pillai, A.R., Vol.VI, op.cit., pp.83-84; Dubrenil, J., -Dupleix, p.104; Robert Orme writes that, 'Mir Asad, Dewan of Safdar Ali, suspected these relations between Chanda Saheb and the French Governor, and advised his master to send his family and treasures to the English at Madras in preference to the French. Accordingly Safdar Ali removed his family to Vellore.(Indostan, I, p.45) Malleson, G.B., op.cit., p.104; Dubrenil, J.- Dupleix, p.102; Dodwell, H., op.cit., 1740-1744 Nos. 11 and 50.

(b) it would enhance the prestige of the French in India in general and of Dupleix in particular; and

(c) it would make Dupleix the real master of the province of Arcot with Chanda Saheb as his faithful agent.

At this time Chanda Saheb was a prisoner of Raghuji at Satara, Raghuji would have released him from captivity only against a heavy ransom. He succeeded in inducing some of the bankers at Satara to advance him fund to effect his release. On September 6, 1744, Ram Chandra Malhar Barve, a banker of Satara signed an agreement to pay four and a half lakhs to Raghuji in return for which he took charge of Chanda Saheb.(98) As Barve could not have kept in his own custody a political prisoner of the Stature of Chanda Saheb and as Govind Rao Chitnis, Shahu's secretary was a party to the agreement, the captive was confined in the fort of Satara, and became a state prisoner. (99) The real fact is that Chanda Saheb merely exchanged Berar for Satara as his abode of captivity, but could not secure his release. For, although Ram Chandra Malhar Barve did not stipulate any interest, he would have released Chanda Saheb only on recovery of the amount he had

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98. The amount of Chanda Saheb's ransom, so runs the agreement, had been fixed at Rs.7,50,000. Of this Rs.3,00,000 was the share of the ransom of his son Abid Ali, whom you intend to keep as a hostage for the recovery of the said sum. The balance of Rs. 4,50,000, I agree to pay you and in return shall take charge of Chanda Saheb." (Vaidya Daftar, Vol. IV, pp.30-31; Sardesai, G.S., Modern Review, 1943, No.74, p.451; but Sardesai in his book 'The New History of the Marathas,' Vol.II,p.256, writes that the bankers of Satara advanced Rs.7,50,000 to Raghuji on account of the release of Chanda Saheb and his son and took charge of the prisoners).

99. Sardesai, G.S., Modern Review, 1943, No.74, pp.451-52.

advanced him; i.e. Rs.4,50,000/-(100). It appears that Chanda Saheb in changing his abode of captivity expected that he would get a better opportunity at the Maratha Capital to persuade some influential Sardars i.e. either Raghuji or even the Peshwa himself, to response his cause and help him to recover his lost throne.

Negotiations as to his release were going on between the Marathas and the Navyut relations of Chanda Saheb even before 1744. The Peshwa's nephew had paid several lakh of rupees on his behalf to Raghuji and he had also promised to give suitable presents to the Nizam for his help in securing his release and departure. Raghuji allowed him to be released. But Chanda Saheb seems to have continued in Maratha custody during the years 1746-1747. The promise of release was conditional. Restoration of Trichinopoly to Hindu rule was one of the conditions of Chanda Saheb's release by Balaji Rao, whom he had exchanged as his jailor in place of Raghuji.

Dupleix was trying to help Chanda Saheb in his own way.

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100. A sum of Rs.35,000 was paid on April 9,1744, to Raghuji on account of Chanda Saheb's release. A receipt for Rs.25,000/- was passed by Raghuji to Vaidya brothers in connection with the transaction for the ransom to be paid for Chanda Saheb's release. (Vaidya Daftar, Vol. II, No.27; Vol.III, No.68,Vol.IV, Nos. 7 and 20. In Vol.II, the date of Chanda Saheb's release is given as April 9,1744; but in Vol.III, it is given as April 13, 1749). Baburao Koner, Vithola Naik Wakade and Vishwanath Bhat undertook to handover Chanda Saheb to Shamji Takole, (the father-in-law of Ramaji Malhar Barve) who was to receive him near Aurangabad within two months and to pay one lakh of rupees to Ramaji Malhar Barve with interest, which he paid to Raghuji as the ransom for Chanda Saheb. If he did not handover the prisoner, then Ramaji Barve was to enjoy the Mamlat of Chanda Saheb's territory according to the contract. Raghuji was to receive Rs.7,50,000 from these three persons who gave an undertaking to Ram Chandra Malhar a day before its payment.(Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, Nos. 42 and 43).

The council of Pondicherry had on Dupleix's recommendations taken interest in the question of securing Chanda Saheb's release. In July 1747, Chanda Saheb sent two letters- one to the Governor of Pondicherry and the other to the Diarist. (A.R.Pillai) The letters carried the message that Dupleix had promised to pay three lakhs for his release and ten thousand would be given to Jayaram Pandit who had been negotiating with Shahu and Raghuji, if he should succeed on bringing him safe to Arcot.(101).

These were the days of intense danger for the French as Pondicherry was subject to English attacks and Dupleix was very anxious that Chanda Saheb should be released and would come to the succour of the French. Dupleix and Chanda Saheb's relatives began to take active measures for his liberation; but Dupleix was unable to guarantee the ransom of the Marathas for its collection and remittance. Dupleix had announced to the company his intention to aid Chanda Saheb (102). He sought the council's sanction for the sum of rupees one lakh to be advanced to Chanda Saheb for they contended on his gratitude and were confident that the loan would be fully repaid (103). However, no amount was advanced to him and the plans of Dupleix to instal Chanda Saheb on the throne of Arcot fell into abeyance for the time being. During this period regular

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101. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.V, p.97, July 14, 1748.

102. Memoire....Contre Dupleix-theices Justifications, p.9. Dupleix's close attachment to Chanda Saheb through all the vicissitudes of his fortune, is a well rooted idea, but must be taken in the light of facts.

103. Martineau, A., Correspondence, IV, pp.231 and 247; Dubrenil,J. 'Dupleix', p.113.

correspondence was maintained between Dupleix on the one hand and Chanda Saheb and Raghuji on the other. Chanda Saheb sent his own messenger to Pondicherry with instructions to his wife to pay off his debts, adding that Raghuji had promised to accompany him to Arcot and to put him in possession of Trichinopoly (104). Dupleix communicated to the Maratha leaders at Satara his willingness to stand as personal security for Chanda Saheb's liabilities (105).

What worried Chanda Saheb was not his release from the Maratha custody but paucity of funds. Appreciating this difficulty of Chanda Saheb, the French Governor promised to advance him three lakh rupees for the expenses of the troops which he was to collect for his contemplated treck to the south (106). However, no amount was paid to Chanda Saheb, Dupleix took the responsibility of guaranting to the Marathas that the promises made by Chanda Saheb would be kept after his accession to the throne of Arcot. Shahu requested the French Governor to urge upon Chanda Saheb to fulfill his promises. (107) Dupleix claimed that he used his influence

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104. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.I, pp.355,358 and 382. Trichinopoly was surrendered to the Nizam-ul-Mulk by the Marathas in August 1743. When the French heard of this news, there were great rejoicings at Pondicherry.

105. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.III, p. 140.

106. In his letter to Dupleix in July 1747, Chanda Saheb expressed his gratitude to him for his promise to advance Rs.3,00,000. One third of this amount was to be paid immediately on Chanda Saheb's departure from Satara. The eighteen instalments to be paid at Cuddapal and the balance when he would reach Arcot. (Pillai, A.R., op.cit. Vol.IV, pp.124-125; Dubrenil,J-Dupleix; p.168, Jayaram Sadashiv accompanied Chanda Saheb to the Karnatak and remained there till the latter's death in June 1752.S.P.D. XXVIII, p.110).

107. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol. VI, pp.235-236.

with Raghuji to get the original demand of sixteen lakhs reduced to two lakhs (108)In the early months of 1748, Chanda Saheb was certainly released and allowed to depart from Satara (109). By the request of Dupleix, Shahu freed Chanda Saheb from the captivity.

Due to all these French-Maratha clashes and conflicts, the French and the English were involved in mutual wars from 1750 to 1760. The English took the side of Mohammad Ali and helped the King of Tanjore. But with the help of the French Murar Rao Ghorpade conquerred Tanjore. The English were unable to help the King of Tanjore in this attack. After this when the French Commander Lally plundered Tanjore, only then an English army was sent there. In this war of the Karnatak, Mankoji fought bravely from the side of the English against the French (110).

The presence of Chanda Saheb at Satara served to establish closer contact between the French and the Marathas. The French victory at Adyar over the army of the Nawab of Arcot in 1746 had

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108. It appears on the part of Dupleix to have been an exaggeration carried out with a view to raising himself in the estimation of his superiors.

109. The movement of Chanda Saheb in the course of the year that elapsed between his release from the Marathas and his actual arrival in Karnatak cannot be known very definitely. By the middle of July it was known in Pondicherry that Chanda Saheb had crossed the Krishna with a very large body of horse, and Murtaza Ali had communicated to him certain proposals in mutual cooperation. By August 1748, Chanda Saheb seems to have reached the country of Savnoor, Bankapur, with a body of 12,000 Maratha horse and it was feared that he would be marching into the lower Karnatak in about a few weeks. Oultru says that he was released even in 1745, without any sort of French intervention. (Pillai, A.R. op.cit. ,Vol.IV, pp.124-125).

110. Ranade, R.G., Rise of the Maratha Power, p.130 (translated by N.R.Phatak).

created a great impression upon the Maratha leaders at Satara. Raghuji was so much impressed by the feat of the French arms that while congratulating the French Governor, he invited him to co-operate with the Marathas during their coming expedition into the south. "Our King", he wrote, "has Commanded me to march to the Karnatak. I shall communicate with you immediately on my arrival there, for I am anxious to speak to you about my great king. You may combine your forces with ours, we shall perform feats of which posterity shall speak for ever."(111).

The situation in the Karnatak for the French was deteriorating day by day. The Peshwa could not proceed to the south, so Raghuji was persuaded to march to the Karnatak. Dupleix preferred this arrangement (112). He had also promised to help Salabat Jang against the Peshwa, but had changed his mind at the last moment. After signing the Treaty of Singhwa, Salabat Jang and his Dewan expressed a desire to meet Raghuji, for they wanted to discuss with him some important affairs. The Maratha General, before accepting the invitation, put a condition that Bussy should promise him his protection. He would then visit his (Bussy's) camp to assure him once again of his friendship for Dupleix and the French nation. Raghuji sent to the Mughal camp on February 29, 1752. At the time of his departure to his capital, Salabat Jang gave him a Jagir and

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111. Dupleix's letters to Bussy of June 14 and 17, AV, B3754 f. to V22-22V.

112. Dupleix seems to have had a soft corner for Raghuji. Ever since the latter's invasion of Karnatak in 1740-1741, his relations with the French had been cordial. He had taken care not to disturb him during his incursions into Bengal.

offered him an elephant and a Sarpech as present (113).

In pursuance of his plan of action, Bussy opened correspondence with the Peshwa. The latter assured him that he would faithfully observe the treaty signed with the French and as a token of the friendship, which he wished to renew with the French general, he sent a Vakil to be stationed at his camp, with orders to accompany him wherever he went (114). In September, when Bussy had certain intelligence that the Peshwa and Raghuji were ready to march against the Deccan, he threatened to attack them, whereupon the Peshwa sent his Vakil to the French General to seek his friendship and to confirm the treaty signed by them at Bhalki. (115).

Raghuji invaded the Nizam's dominion in the north towards the end of February, with 25,000 troops. Bussy marched against the invader. The campaign lasted till April, 10. The Nizam's army had proceeded to within twenty five coss from Nagpur, Raghuji's capital, when the latter sued for peace. Although the Nizam was in a position to destroy Raghuji completely, he granted him peace on terms which were sufficiently moderate, for the Peshwa had expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that this war should have been carried on with so much vigour and acrimony. Bussy believed that the Peshwa was really happy at the subjugation of Raghuji, who had proved a

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113. BN, NAF, 4159, f. 144, 148 V, 149V.

114. BN, NAF, 9158 f. 127; Rajwade, V.K.,op.cit., Vol.I, p.89; AN, C284,f. 138.

115. Martineau, A., 'Bussy', p.120. On the otherhand, the Maratha Vakils letter (dated September 17) to his master leads us to believe that it was Bussy who wrote to the Peshwa to send a Vakil to his camp. (Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.I,p.48).

rebel to his own authority. (116) Dupleix suspected that Raghuji must have been instigated by the Peshwa in invading the territory of the Nizam to prevent him from marching upon Poona. However, the Peshwa expressed regret for Raghuji's action and requested Bussy not to regard it as a violation of the treaty concluded at Bhalki, promising that he would punish Raghuji at the proper time (117).

Later on none of the Maratha Chiefs helped the French in fighting an outside enemy in spite of their promises. Raghuji tendered the apology to Bussy in these words" I can give you several reasons to support my conduct, but I shall content myself with giving you only one, viz., that I am a servant of the house of Shahu Raja for three generations. I could not help obeying the orders of Tarabai, who asked me to support Balaji Rao".(118)

Chanda Saheb was made the Nawab of Arcot, after the death of Anwaruddin, with the assistance of the Marathas. So he was asked to fulfill his promises made to Raja Shahu. But after the death of Shahu, Chanda Saheb wanted to take Tanjore which was against the agreement. He even tried to attack Trichinopoly again, but failed to capture it. Chanda Saheb thought that the Maratha kingdom had ended with the death of Raja Shahu. But he did not want to displease the Maratha Sardars, viz., the Peshwa, Raghuji, Fateh Singh

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116. BN, NAF, 9159, f.280.304,9158,f.162V-63-173; Martineau,A,-'Bussy', p.165. Tarabai had also intervened in favour of Raghuji.
117. BN, NAF,9159,f.286V,9158 F.206V.
118. BN, NAF, 9159,f.144.

and shripati Rao etc., with the fear that they might attack him with the help of Nasir Jang. Hence in those circumstances Chanda Saheb needed their friendship for making his position strong. His claim for the Nawabship of Karnatak was supported by the French. Even with the help of the French Chanda Saheb could not recapture Trichinopoly or his other lost possessions. On the other hand the French tried to diminish the English influence in the Deccan politics with the help of Chanda Saheb, but they were also not successful. Chanda Saheb could not regain his lost footing in the Deccan, although he tried for it throughout his later period of life.

Chanda Saheb died in June 1752 (119). Dupleix set up Chanda Saheb's son, Raja Saheb, as the French candidate for the Nawabship of Karnatak. But he proved incompetent. Dupleix then offered the post to Murtaza Ali Khan, the Killedar of Vellore, who had in 1742, treacherously murdered Safdar Ali Khan, the then Nawab of Karnatak(120)

SECTION IV

RAGHUJI AND THE NIZAM

The relationship between the Nizam and the Bhonsles of

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119. It is said that Chanda Saheb was killed at the instigation of Muhammad Ali. (Fort St.George,Diary and Consultation Book-Military Department,1752,p.51; Tuzuk-i-Walajah,vol.I,p.110 ; Cambridge H.C., War on the Coast of Coromandal,1761,p.28; Orme, Vol.I, pp.236-242; Wilks, op.cit.,Vol.I,p.177).

120. Appendix -VIII.

Nagpur dates back to the time of Kanhoji Bhonsle. A collusion took place between Kanhoji and the Nizam in the year 1722 A.D.(121). It was said that Raghuji and Fateh Singh had entered the Bhaganagar province in February 1727, with ten to twelve thousand troops. Raghuji captured Narayan Peth and Hasunabad. There he came into clash with the army of Nasirjang. His Sardars Sultanji Nimbalkar, Chandrasen Jadhav and Veerapa were present, but Veerapa ran away and Raghuji captured his two horses. This news was conveyed to Nasir Jang by Chandrasen on his return. Upon this Nasirjang sent Sultanji Rao Nimbalkar and Chandrasen along with five thousand troops to attack Raghuji. Skirmishes took place between the two armies for eighteen days and many were killed on both sides.(122) Raghuji ravaged the province of the Nizam. At last he was brought to the city (123) by Ramdas Pant and Anwarkhan, where Raghuji met Salabat Jang(124).

Kanhoji did not take any part in this battle and went away towards Mahur when the fight broke up (125). The Nizam sought the help of Kanhoji and some other Maratha Sardars for stopping the inroads of the Peshwa into Malwa and Bundelkhand. When the Peshwa entered into the Malwa, the Nizam began to plan his diplomatic activities in this connection. The Nizam strengthened his position

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121. S.P.D. X, 3.
122. Ibid., XX, 47; Purandare Daftar, Vol.I,No.80,(edited by K.V. Purandare).
123. Ibid, XV, 85.
124 Ibid., XX, 126.
125. Ibid., X,74.

after returning from Delhi. On the way he conciliated Chhatrasal, Jai Singh and others and detached Kanhoji and others from their allegiance to Shahu. All this he did to check the advance of the Peshwa into Malwa and Bundelkhand. (126) From the commencement of his viceroyalty in the Deccan Nizam-ul-Mulk as an astute diplomat sought to check the growing power of the Marathas by stopping the payment of Chauth and by indefatigably instigating the disaffected self-seeking and ambitious chieftains of Maharashtra against Shahu(127). With selfish motive and personal ambitions chieftains like Chandrasen Jadav, Rambhaji Nimbalkar, Shripat Rao Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhonsle and Dabhade undermined the prestige of the central authority(128). Kanhoji like Chandrasen Jadav and Dabhade tried to desert the cause of the Marathas and joined the standard of the Nizam. Therefore, treacherous intrigues were carried on by Shripatrao Pratinidhi and Kanhoji with the Nizam(129) and for this purpose they had an interview with the Nizam(130). The Peshwa tried to win back Chandrasen while the Nizam tried to induce Dabhade, Bande and Gaikwad to desert the cause of Shahu(131).

When Trichinopoly was lost in 1741, the Nizam-ul-Mulk

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126. S.P.D., X, 27.
127. Dighe, V.G., Peshwa Bajirao I, p.8.
128. Majumdar, R.C., op.cit., p.119.
129. S.P.D., X, 39.
130. Ibid., XIII, 44.
131. Ibid., X, 73.

highly resented this Maratha encroachment upon what he considered as his own preserve. Ever since the disaster of Bhopal, this Nobleman was fast losing his power and prestige. While Raghuji was engaged in reducing Chanda Saheb to humiliation, the Nizam-ul-Mulk was carrying on a war with his son Nasir Jang. When Nasir Jang was put down in July 1741, there arose a bitter jealousy between the Peshwa and Raghuji, which to some extent relieved the Nizam's anxieties. He even felt secret satisfaction that one of his competitors in the Karnatak, Chanda Saheb, had been happily removed. But what the Nizam resented most was that Murar Rao Ghorpade and Pratap Singh came to be firmly planted at Trichinopoly and Tanjore respectively. So that when the Peshwa and Raghuji came to oppose each other in Bengal during the early months of 1743 A.D., the Nizam utilised the opportunity of their absence in undoing the Maratha work in the Karnatak. He started from Golkunda in January 1743 with a large force and descended into the Karnatak, aiming at the recapture of Trichinopoly (132).

Murar Rao Ghorpade, the guardian of that place, learnt of this danger and applied to Shahu for help. But all the Maratha forces were then engaged in Bundelkhand and Bengal under the Peshwa himself and no succour could be spared for Murar Rao (133). The

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132. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.257; Majumdar,R.C., op.cit., pp.313-314.

133. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.257.

Nizam-ul-Mulk in company with his son Nasir Jang arrived at Arcot in March 1743, with an enormous army, which the poor Nawab could not oppose. He took possession of Arcot and appointed his own nominee Anwaruddin Khan to the governorship. The Nizam then went to Trichinopoly and called upon Murar Rao to deliver up Trichinopoly. He could not resist the demand and spent four months in negotiations. After six months, terms were arranged, by which Murar Rao surrendered the place to the Nizam and the Nizam granted him the post of Gutti and took from him the possession of Trichinopoly on August 29, 1743 (134). Thus Murar Rao gave up the cause of the Marathas, and a glorious victory of Raghuji was reduced to a defeat in such an easy manner (135).

In fact Murar Rao wanted the same freedom of action in the Karnatak as had been given to Raghuji in Berar,(136) which he had not received. And perhaps this was the main cause of his jealousy towards Raghuji, which made him to become a traitor

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134. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.I, p.214, Sardesai,G.S.,op.cit. Vol.II, p.258; Parasnis, D.B., Itihas Sangraha.

135. According to P.Setu Madhavrao Pagdi, this invariably shows the military genius of Raghuji where he had won it with such an ease, only to lose it in the same easy manner. As one of the news-writer from the camp of Raghuji writes, "The seige of this fort, i.e. Trichinopoly, is a great shock to Raghuji. Although he is in Bengal, his heart is in Trichinopoly. He left off his campaign in Bengal in great haste and without achieving any result, has returned to the province of Berar. In short this seige has resulted in great confusion." (18th century Deccah,p.153).

136. S.P.D.XXVIII, 35.

later on. He collected a sum of thirty lakh of rupees from the various chieftains of the Karnatak and opposed the advance of the Peshwa in the Karnatak (137). Mursr Rao and Nandraj falsified an account of Trichinopoly fort being retained by Mohammad Ali, changed sides, and made common cause with the French (138). Formerly when Murar Rao was the Killedar of Trichinopoly, he had asked Benyon (French) for ammunition, but he had neither resolved absolutely to refuse his request nor to enter into any engagement (139). Thus Murar Rao sought the help of the English against the French etc. But later on it was refused, because the country language was so little known, and the interpreters were so bad. that the English did not comprehend the politics of the country. So when he applied for ammunition it was refused (140).

The Nizam-ul-Mulk retraced his steps from Trichinopoly

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137. Ibid., New Series I, No.140.

138. Ibid., No.159.

139. Madras Public Consultations, Vol.11,pp.168-169.

140. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, pp.201-202.

In fact the real cause was that the English did not want to get themselves involved in the wars between the French and the local powers. Previously they had kept themselves aloof from the party politics. Later on seeing the confusing political condition of the south India, they exploited it fully for their own advantage.

Murar Rao was an opportunist. He left and joined different parties according to his wishes and for his selfish gains. First of all he came to the Karnatak along with Raghuji and was appointed the Governor of Trichinopoly. Later on he joined Nasir Jang and surrendered the fort to Nizam. He attacked the French in the retreat and resolved to join the English. But afterwards he concerted measures with Dupleix and harassed the British commander Lawrence. Thus this attitude of defection adversely effected the Maratha position in the Karnatak. He was also partially responsible for undoing the work of Raghuji in the Karnatak.

According to Martineau, Dupleix persuaded Murar Rao to join him openly. (Martineau, Dupleix et l'Inde Francoise,Vol.III, pp. 308-310).

and halted for sometime at Arcot, where the English and the French traders sent him presents as they regarded him as the overlord of the southern region. His large forces quickly reduced the country around causing thereby enormous loss to the European traders.

In the following year the Nizam-ul-Mulk posted his grandson Muzaffar Jang at Adoni with instructions to look after the government of the eastern Karnatak and he himself returned to Golkunda in February 1744.

Shahu was distressed to hear the loss of Trichinopoly. He had then by him only two men of some weight, Fateh Singh and Babuji Naik, both of whom were incompetent to undertake an enterprise, particularly as the Peshwa was not incliined to cooperate with them. Babuji Naik thrust himself forward and in a weak moment Shahu allowed him to proceed against the Nizam-ul-Mulk. He started from Satara with a large body of horsemen with the intention of taking Trichinopoly back from the Nizam-ul-Mulk's possession. Thereupon, Nawab Asaf Jah wrote an urgent letter to Anwaruddin to come to his help and the latter, in spite of his being over seventy years of age, immediately marched north with a body of 12,000 cavalry. He was joined by his son Hazrat Ali Mohammad Ali, who had been left at Hyderabad as his father's deputy. The rulers of Cuddapah, Karnool, Savanoor, Sira, Bednoor and Mysore and the Jagirdar of Adoni (Muzaffar Jang) all joined him with their contingents which totalled in all 69,000 men. For a weak the fight went on and Babuji Naik was pursued in the direction of Trichinopoly. His forces were slender. After fighting hard for three days

and nights, the Nawab inflicted a severe defeat upon him near Basawapattam about February 15, 1745 (141). Finally the enemy ran away in the direction of Poona and the victorious Nawab turned back, after despatching letters of congratulations on the success of the Nizam and shortly afterwards reached Arcot safely (142).

In this campaign the bitter antipathy between the Naik and the Peshwa became more marked. The negotiations and plans for a mutual settlement of the Karnatak affair were carried on by Nasir Jang and Babuji Naik (143). The Peshwa also tried his best for effecting a compromise between the Nizam and Babuji Naik. For this he sent despatches to the Nizam and his minister. The Nizam deputed Hidyal Mohidur Khan against Babuji Naik, and Udaiji Chavan sought an interview with the Nizam (144).

Babuji Naik returned to Satara in discomfiture, and renewed his efforts the next year. The Peshwa was in touch with the news and had knowledge of the whereabouts of Babuji Naik and

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141. S.P.D. XXXX, 51- it is a fragmentary letter giving news of Babuji Naik's overtures to the Nizam; Tazuk-i-Walajahi of Burhanuddin-translation by G.C.Srinivasachari-I.H.H.C.P.Vol. XIII, p.126; S.P.D. XXV, 10-72; XXVI, 13,16,20-29; XXVIII, 34-35, 52-53; K.S.P.Y.45, 48, 52, 54.

142. The Despatch of the Madras council to the company, dated Feby. 15, 1745, stated that in December Anwaruddin marched to join the Nawab of Cuddapal and Kurnool against the Marathas while the Nizam sent 10,000 horse. Though the armies were near each other, no action had as yet taken place. "The Nawab offers a sum of money but the Marathas demand Trichinopoly. If the latter should win a victory the country will suffer severely both from them and from their poligars who always seige such occasions to plunder. So it is hoped the affair will be accommodated" (Dodwell, H., Madras Despatches-1744-1755, p.9.)

143. S.P.D. XXXX, 52.

144. Ibid., 53.

Raghuji. It was reported that Babuji Naik and Raghuji went to Aurangabad and met Asaf Jah there. (145) His agent Raghunath Ganesh obtained the news of the secret correspondence between Babuji Naik and Antaji Shivdeo. Babuji Naik therein represented to Antaji Shivadeo the advantage that would occur to them if they work in cooperation in the Karnatak and oppose the Nizam. Antaji Shivdeo had entered the Karnatak on behalf of Pratinidhi (146). News about the movements of the Nizam and Babuji Naik, and the progress of Babuji Naik's expedition into Karnatak and his plans to overcome the Nizam were regularly reported to the Peshwa by his Vakil at the court of Nasir Jang. (147)

Babuji Naik and Abaji had again suffered failure during the year 1746, and had been dismissed by the Nizam (148). Babuji Naik incurred huge debts which he was unable to pay and had had to endure great financial difficulties, which he attributed to the apathy of Shahu and his Peshwa towards his interest. He threatened to starve himself to death and had even recourse to poison. It was detected in time and his life was saved (149).

In the end the Peshwa's silent diplomacy triumphed. He won over the Nizam's minister Sayyad Lashkar Khan and through him nullified all the efforts of the Naik to improve his position either at the Nizam's court or elsewhere in the Karnatak. Shahu

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145. Aitihasik Patravayavahar-No.41.
146. S.P.D. XXXX, 34.
147. Ibid, 35 and 48.
148. Ibid., XXV, 23.
149. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.259.

became helpless in the matter and ultimately consigned the whole affair to the discretion of the Peshwa, who thereupon equipped an expedition and despatched his cousin Sadashivrao Bhau into the Karnatak on December 5, 1746 (150), with Mahadoba Purandare and Shobharam Bhau as his advisers. Sadashivrao possessed superior resources and performed his task with efficiency. He quickly established Maratha government in the western Karnatak and returned in May from Basawapattam, after getting the first valuable experience in leading an independent expedition, but Trichinopoly, however, never again came back in Maratha possession.

Raghuji made a treaty with the Nizam for routing the influence of the Peshwa from Karnatak. According to this treaty if the Nizam would help Raghuji in materialising his plans in the Karnatak, he would get ten to twenty lakhs from Raghuji (151).

Seeing that his plans and policies were being foiled by the Peshwa, Raghuji began to carry out anti-Peshwa activities in the neighbourhood of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the Karnatak. In the Karnatak his successes were nullified by the negligence of Shahu and the jealousy of the Peshwa, who did not support Babuji Naik there. Therefore, the Nizam tried to check the activities of Raghuji in the Karnatak, so as not to lose the hard won victory

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150. S.P.D. XXV, 29, 46-72; Purandare Daftar vol. I, 59; Aitihasik Patravayavahar, 73-78.

151. Vaidya Daftar- Vol. IV, NO. 14, dated 3.3.1746.

there (152). Thereupon, Raghuji also began to create disturbances in Berar province, as it was under the control of the Nizam at that time (153). The Peshwa was also informed about the hostile activities of Raghuji in Varhad and other areas (154).

The Nawab of Savnoor did not like the Peshwa's entry into the Karnatak and was trying to bring about his withdrawal from that region. On the other hand Raghuji wrote to the Nawab that the King had assigned the province of the Karnatak to him, therefore, nobody else could enter in that province (155).

When his plans began to fail, Babuji Naik also began to create trouble in the Karnatak after his defeat by the Nizam in Trichinopoly. He also wanted to have the Karnatak in his possession. Murar Rao Ghorpade, Sambhaji of Kolhapur and others were also interested and involved in the Karnatak affair (156).

Raghuji made a request to Shahu to lend him the services of Mahipat Rao Sumant, Shahu's foreign minister, because he had to settle some political business with the Nizam, who was at Pardapur on his way to Burhanpur (157).

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152. S.P.D. XXV,42.
153. Ibid, XXVIII, 22 and 31.
154. Ibid., XXV, 41.
155. Ibid., XXVIII, 37.
156. Ibid., XXVI, p.330; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV,No.27,Sept.1747.
157. Vaidya Daftar, Vol. IV, 15.

The Nizam and Nasir Jang were not on good terms with each other. Nasir Jang was trying to get the Subdari of Deccan for himself since the time, when his father the Nizam-ul-Mulk had been called to Delhi by the Emperor Muhammad Shah. So the Nizam despatched his agents to Umabai Dabhade and Raghuji to Satara, to seek their help against Nasir Jang. Muzaffar Jang was marching towards Tanjore and the Queen and the Pratinidhi were intriguing with the Nizam. In short, the Nizam was reported to be entirely hostile to the Peshwa (158), but this was not true. The Nizam sent his agent Abdul Hussain Khan to Satara, where he was received with great distinction by Shahu and the Peshwa. In this way Shahu and the Peshwa were helping the Nizam against Nasir Jang (159).

The Nizam died on May 21, 1748. His death created a stir in the Deccan, and early next month Chanda Saheb effected his escape from Satara and proceeded to the south, collecting troops on the way (160). He now joined Muzaffar Jang and persuaded him, in spite of his great attachment to Nawab Anwaruddin, to advance against the Karnatak. He assured him that the Navyut nobles and the French would help him against the Nawab and finally both descended into the Karnatak.

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158. S.P.D. XXVIII, 28.
159. Ibid., XXVIII, 30.
160. Ibid., XXV, 74; S.P.D. XX, 47 and 71; Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.256.

In 1749, Nasir Jang, the Subedar of the Deccan, succeeded to the father's throne. But he was perturbed at the defeat and death of Anwaruddin in the battle of Ambur which took place on August 3, 1749 (161). He collected his army to lead an expedition to the south in order to establish his authority there,(162) and promised to give him some land in reward. As Raghuji was busy with the affairs of Bengal and Orissa, he sent his son Janoji with an army of ten thousand troops to the Karnatak for the help of Nasir Jang and also sent to him the robes of honour (163). With his own army and assisted by the Maratha contingent of ten thousand horse Nasir Jang started from Kulbarga and advanced towards the south. As the news of his advance spread, all the Mughal dependents and tributaries in the Karnatak flocked under his banner. This mighty combination naturally disheartened Chanda Saheb and his ally Muzaffar Jang. Nasir Jang advanced in person against Jinji. His army numbered twenty thousand men. Dupleix had sent against him 38,000 men. Nasir Jang was defeated and killed on December 16, 1750. Before the death of Nasir Jang, some conflict had arisen between Raghuji and the Nizam, and thereupon the army of the Nizam came directly from Chandrapur to Mahur. Raghuji sent Trimbakji to the Nizam for negotiations, but by the efforts of Janoji Nimbalkar,

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161. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.VI, p.235.
162. S.P.D., VI, 11.
163. Ibid., 58; Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.VI, p.361.

the affection and sympathy of the Nizam was won over. Thereafter, Raghuji met the Nizam and the differences between the two were patched up (164).

After the death of Nasir Jang at Pondicherry, Muzzaffar Jang proclaimed himself the ruler of the Deccan and he also declared that Dupleix was the Nawab of the Karnatak. But he relinquished to his ally Chanda Saheb the title of Nawab. They were successful only with the French assistance. But not long after his elevation to his grand-father's, throne, Muzaffar Jang was killed in suppressing a mutiny. The French, now the mastar of the kingdom, set up in the dead man's place his uncle Salabat Jang (165). But immediately after his succession to the throne of the Deccan, Salabat Jang had to face the Maratha incursion into his province. He pitched his camp at Kistna and from there he advanced sixteen coss beyond the Kistna, where the Maratha army awaited him. They sent him a message through their vakil that they would make terms only if fifty lakh of rupees in ready money were offered and Jagirs for seventy lakhs, otherwise they would prepare to attack him. Salabat Jang replied that he would only pay the same Chauth and allow the same Jagir as the Nizam had paid and allowed formerly, but not a blade of grass more, and that if they would not accept this, he preferred war. Thereupon, the Marathas made themselves

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164. S.P.D. XX, 71.

165. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.IX, p.54.

ready. Peshwa was also preparing at Poona to attack Salabat Jang. Raghuji's son was also halting with the army on the banks of the Kistna to attack Savanoor, Bankapuram and Mysore and to settle the affairs in the Karnatak (166). While Baji Rao, Fateh Singh, Raghuji and others lay encamped on the banks of the Kistna with an army of forty thousand horse, near Salabat Jang, news came from Satara that Tarabai and Umabai had been imprisoned and that the internal dissensions were likely to brew. They, therefore, settled the matter on any terms i.e. by accepting a Sanad for the Chauth of Golkunda, Karnatak and Trichinopoly (167). The Marathas then returned to Satara on account of the troubles.

On June 20, 1751, Salabat Jang, escorted by de Bussy and a French contingent, entered Aurangabad in triumph and proclaimed himself Nizam-ul-Mulk. But the presence of the French contingent in the army of Salabat Jang threw the French and the Marathas into opposite camps. By August 1751, Salabat Jang's authority was consolidated with the help of the French contingent which was integrated in his army. The Peshwa was occupied in settling his domestic affairs, so he retreated to his capital. The enemies of the Peshwas, with Tarabai as their head were constantly in correspondence with Ramdas Pant (Salabat Jang's Dewan), seeking his support to dislodge the Peshwa from his office. Tarabai tried to seek the support of the French in her cause. She had promised the office of the Peshwa

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166. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.IX, p.403.
167. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.II, p.47, (Ed.1912); Pillai, A.R. op.cit., Vol.VII, pp. 430-432, (April 18, 1751).

to the nephew of Ramdas Pant if the latter could secure for her Salabat Jang's support (168). Senapati Dabhade, the only Maratha Chieftain who had joined the Mughals, gave an assurance that no steps would be taken against Raghuji, who had promised help to the Mughals with twenty thousand horse (169), but had failed to keep his word. Ramdas Pant reported these happenings to the Mughals. Thereupon, the Mughal army again marched on but its further progress was barred by the Marathas. Ramdas Pant was forced to come to terms. Peace was finally concluded between the two parties on February 19, 1752.

When the news of the march of the Mughal army reached the Peshwa, he hastened to save his capital, for this purpose he entered the enemy's country. His men scalded the fort of Trimbak. The Mughal army was closely followed by the Marathas. The clash which took place between the Peshwa and Salabat Jang gave much alarm to Mohammad Ali, (who had retained the fort of Trichinopoly) who, however, was assured about the Peshwa's military prowess, (170), and promised to join the Peshwa when he would march southward (171). It was suggested to the Peshwa by his agent in south Karnatak, that he should destroy the French power at the Nizam's court root and branch.

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168. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, p.101.

169. Raghunath Ganesh wrote to the Pant Pradhan informing him how Raghuji had been seduced and had gone over to the side of the Mughals. The Mughal had agreed to give him Jagir. So the writer remarked that Raghuji had become like a beggar, who being helpless, was given a Jagir by the Mughal. Therefore, he requested the Peshwa, that if permission would be given to him, then with the help of money and army, the Jagir of Raghuji could be confiscated. (Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.I,No.7).

170. S.P.D.,New Series I, No.154.

171. Ibid, No. 153.

This would make his conquest of Karnatak easy as Murar Rao and Nandraj had defected to the side of the french (172). At last a peace proposal came from the side of the Nizam. The Viceroy left the decision to de Bussy. The French general preferred a solid peace to a doubtful war, and advised the surrender of a considerable tract of land, provided Raghuji first withdrew from the eastern provinces. Balaji ordered Raghuji to do so, and his order was complied with. Thus in spite of de Bussy's genius and the French valour, the Peshwa acquired in the war the sacred town and fort of Trimbak, and the whole country west of Berar from the Tapti to the Godavari. This is known as the Treaty of Bhalki, conducted on November 25, 1752.

Taking advantage of the war then existing between the Peshwa and Salabat Jang, Raghuji surprised and took the forts of Manik Durg, Gawilgarh and Narnallah, and laid under contributions the whole of the country between Payen Ganga and Godavari, and even drove out the Mughal officers from there, establishing his own military posts in their rooms. He subsequently withdrew his garrison from beyond the Payen Ganga and would probably have been entirely stripped of his acquisition by Salabat Jang, but for the presence of the French army, which interrupted a treaty between the contending powers that was much to Raghuji's disadvantages (173).

In his ambition to extend his conquest on the side of Berar,

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172. Ibid., No.159.

173. Captain Ramsay, G., Report on the Nagpur State down to 1845, p.4.

during the disturbances, which attended the French interference in the affairs of Hyderabad, Raghuji drew upon himself the united forces of Salabat Jang and Bussy in 1754. The result of the war was disastrous to him and would have been more so, had not Bussy been anxious to visit some newly acquired districts in the northern circars. This misfortune was in some measures mitigated by the acquisition of the fortress of Gawilgarh, which was made over to Raghuji by a Gond Chief, and the absence of the French prevented the terms of treaty (which had been imposed upon him) from being enforced (174). Before this war ten or twelve thousand horse of the Marathas belonging to Raghuji went towards Machelapatam and ruined and pillaged the province (175).

Salabat Jang marched with his army to Wagera Sangam by the banks of Ganga river. From Wagera he marched against Nagpur which belonged to Raghuji. He arrived at Ponnar on the other side of Nagpur. Raghuji's son with the whole of his army retired to Golkunda country with all possible speed, because he thought that his army was too small to face the enemy's army. There was a great discord and deceipt in Salabat Jang's camp also. When Salabat Jang's army lay at Nagpur, Raghuji employed some of his horses to rob and pillage on the road. In the battle which ensued between Salabat Jang and Raghuji, the Marathas were defeated and put to flight. Salabat Jang

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174. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.56.

175. Records of St. George- Country correspondence Nos. 107 and 254.

went to Hyderabad with two thousand horse and fire cannon; which he had captured (176). Hanmant Rao (177) undertook to negotiate a peace upon which the affair was finished through the means of Shahnaz Khan and Sultan Khan. A treaty was concluded between Salabat Jang and Raghuji on May 29, 1754. The proposals which were made by Salabat Jang were accepted by Raghuji (178).

SECTION V

RAGHUJI'S ROLE IN SOUTHERN CAMPAIGNS

The Marathas got a strong foot hold in the Karnatak only due to Raghuji. In this invasion Raghuji, Fateh Singh and Murar Rao Ghorpade were the main chieftains. Raghuji's superior war tactics

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176. Pillai, A.R., op.cit., Vol.IX, p.180.

177. He was a son of Sultanji Nimbalkar and was a man of distinction. Beside this he was a relation to Raghuji by marriage and kept an army of seven or eight thousand horse.

178. Records of St. George-Country correspondence, 1754, No.179. Following were the terms of treaty:-
(a) Salabat Jang proposed that Raghuji should receive a quantity of straw and grain in the Subah of Berar as usual but should not insist on it to be delivered all at once but on the contrary they might receive them according as they might be gathered in by the circar and be agreeable to the advice of the Amuldar.
(b)He demanded that a Jagir of the amount of one lakh of rupees be allowed to Sabaji Bhonsle out of the Subah of Berar on condition that he should serve in the army but as he did not do that, the Jagir should be returned.
(c) He demanded that several districts belonging to the Jagir of Laxman Gandacola, which had been seized, be restored as he was in his service. Raghuji told that he would not only restore all that part of Jagir under his seizure, but would also assign to him in possession the several guards already placed.
(d)He demanded that no army should be sent to Golkunda.
(e)He desired not to give protection to Mohammad Mohayan Khan Amuldar of Chicacola, who had to give the circar an account in case if he arrived with Raghuji.
(f)He demanded a forfeit of five lakhs to be given in ready specia.
(g)As wished by Salabat Jang, Raghuji took an oath upon the diety that he would not fail in his agreement.

and shrewd policy made him the main architect in the capture of Trichinopoly and Arcot, and thus the main charge of these places came in the hands of Raghuji and the other two were thrown into the background (179). In these campaigns Raghuji showed his masterly tactics of warfare. But his brilliant successes in the Karnatak were reverted to by the negligence of Shahu and the jealousies of the Pesha, who did not support Babuji Naik there. Therefore, the Nizam tried to check the activities of Raghuji in the Karnatak, so as not to lose the hard won victory there. There was another cause also. After his southern expeditions, Raghuji became so involved in the eastern sphere, that the influence of the Marathas was reduced to zero in the Deccan, due to the rise of Hyder Ali. In fact he could not consolidate his victory over the Karnatak due to the Bengal affairs, as in 1744, he had to leave for Bengal, leaving the affairs of the Karnatak incomplete and unattended. He sent his son Janoji, but he could not fare well there.

In his southern campaigns Raghuji tried to maintain the friendship with the English. He promised that the Marathas would not molest Fort St. George and sent presents in token of the English friendship (180). The English also assured him of their respect and friendship and sent presents both to Raghuji and to Fateh Singh(181). They also sent compliments to Raghuji on the capture of Trichinopoly (182). Although Dubash Venkatachalan tried to incite the

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179. S.P.D. Letters throw plenty of light on the friction and relationship between Raghuji and Fateh Singh.
180. Madras Public Consultations- Vol. 71, pp.89-90.
181. Dodwell, H., op.cit., 1740-1744, Nos. 88 and 90.
182. Records of Fort St. George- Vol. XXVI, p.60.

Marathas against the English, yet Raghuji renewed the friendship that had begun in the time of King Shivaji. They protected the English settlements in the south as they promised the people of Devanampattanam their protection (183).

The Nawab expected these European powers to give financial assistance against the Marathas, in fact the Nawab had asked them to do so. When the Marathas demanded three lakh pagas from the Nawab, he in turn expected the Europeans to contribute towards the sum he had agreed to pay the Marathas. Chanda Saheb himself wanted to make demands on the English, and if he could not enforce compliance he would probably call in the Marathas to his aid (184).

The Hindus were also very happy at the coming of Raghuji in the province of the Karnatak, because when the Nizem had entered that province, the idol of God had been taken away by the Mohammedans. Requests were made to Aliwardi Khan, the Nawab of Bengal for the restoration of idol, but the Nawab had demanded fifty or sixty thousand of rupees for its restoration. The people were helpless and sad, because they could not perform religious rites etc. in the absence of the idol from the Mandir. So they hailed the coming of the Marathas as their liberator, and thought that by his help the idol would be restored in the Mandir (185).

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183. Ibid. pp. 82-88.
184. Dodwell, H., op.cit., 1740-1744, Nos. 50 and 51.
185. Bharat Itihas Sanshodak Mandal, Traimasik, Vol.XXXI, No.77.

SECTION VI

EFFECTS OF RAGHUJI'S SOUTHERN CAMPAIGNS

Although Raghuji's southern campaigns gave him name and fame and enhanced the prestige of the Marathas, yet financially they were total failure. The devastation they caused was ruinous and often wanton, but the amount of wealth acquired was smaller - it was far short of their expectations. The consequence was that though the Marathas gleamed every blade of grass, there was but little also to gather and they felt that the campaign had been a failure.

French commerce suffered heavily as a result of the Maratha depredations (186). English trade was also effected by the Maratha incursions into the Karnatak. Investment was diminished because of the Maratha trouble and of the Madras merchants being forbidden to procure cloth from Salem etc. But the Madras sea custom was increased by Moorship from Bengal landing goods at Madras instead of at St. Thome for fear of the Marathas (187). It hindered the cotton and yarn being brought into the country (188). The country was ravaged and plundered heavily on account of the Maratha attacks (189).

Because of this Maratha incursion into the south, the French and the English became involved in wars from 1750 to 1760. They

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186. Martineau, A., Correspondence III, pp.201-202.
187. Public Despatches to England, Vol.XIII, pp.3 to 70.
188. Ibid., pp.73-124.
189. We get numerous descriptions of these ravages and plunder in Pillai Diary and the Calender of Madras Records.

sided and gave help to the Marathas or to some other ruler of the south in suppressing and opposing their enemies and thus they also got themselves involved actively in the politics of south India, which gave them an opportunity to increase their power and prestige in India. By his firm attitude towards Raghuji, Dumas had earned a name for himself and for the French power in India. That is why the Indian powers such as Chanda Saheb, the Nizam and the Marathas, sought their help in suppressing their enemies and in establishing their authority. The result was that, later on, these Indian powers were humbled and defeated by these European powers and the way was paved for the English to establish their empire in India. Only this party politics of the Indian rulers, encouraged them to plung into their affairs and to influence them.

The Maratha-French relations were purely commercial in the beginning. By 1740, the French had gradually improved their position in India so much so that the Indian Princes looked to them for protection in times of difficulty. The Maratha invasion of the province of Arcot (1740-41) added further to the growing prestige of the French in India. Dumas's repeated defiance of the redoubtable Raghuji not only brought him congratulations from the Nizam but from the Emperor himself (190). Thus the Maratha penetration into the deeper south gave an opportunity to the French power to rise in India.

Due to this Karnatak affair, the court of Satara became a

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190. Hatalkar, V.G., Relations between the French and the Marathas, pp. 272-273.

web of intrigues, treachery, defection and hostilities, because many sardars were anxious for a share in the affairs of the Karnatak with the help of their supporters at the Satara Court.

The situation in the Karnatak also became very complicated due to the involvement of so many powers, i.e. the French the English, the Nizam, the Maratha and Mysore etc. in its affairs. There were other factors also such as the intrigues of Sahu's queens, the hostile activities of Murar Rao Ghorpade, the interference of the politics of the Karnatak and the checking of Raghuji's activities by the Nizam and Fateh Singh's and Babuji Naik's plan for the possession of the Karnatak.

The expedition of Rajaram as well as the subsequent invasions of the Marathas into the south led by Raghuji and Fateh Singh in 1741, gave ample opportunities to the Marathas to display their martial spirit and wonderful gallantry. They had to deal with the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Karnatak, the English, the French and some smaller states and zamindars in Southern India.

The Maratha campaigns in the south enabled Raghuji Bhonsle to secure over the mind of Raja Shahu as powerful a hold as that enjoyed by Baji Rao Peshwa himself.(191)

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191. Majumdar, R.C., op.cit., p. 336, footnote No.4.

CHAPTER IV

RAGHUJI'S BENGAL INVASIONS - 1741-1751.

SECTION I

Causes of Bengal Invasions:-

It was Raghuji Bhonsle I, who had indulged in dreams of Maratha expansion in all directions, in which several capable Maratha leaders came forth to secure a share. As early as 1738, he secured a Sanad from Raja Shahu, entrusting to him the eastern field of Bengal as his exclusive sphere for the levy of chauth. The actual words in the documents are, "The Subahs of Lucknow, Maksudabad, Bundelkhand, Allahabad, Patna, Dacca and Bihar are made over as Raghuji's field of activity."(1) It was indeed a rough demarcation, with no notion of a definite boundary or geographical accuracy on the map. A scramble thus arose between Raghuji and the Peshwa, each trying to secure the eastern sphere. The Peshwa had already occupied Bundelkhand and appointed Naro Shanker for its management, thus giving sufficient umbrage to Raghuji as an encroachment on his sphere. There soon arose an inevitable clash between the Peshwa and Raghuji, as the latter's conquest of Trichinopoly now gave him prominence in the Maratha Court. His brilliant successes in the Karnatak and the capture of Chanda

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1. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.208.

Saheb naturally gave him a high place in the Raja's favour.

Raghuji look-ed on this eastern province of Bengal as his exclusive sphere and had showed deep resentment when the Peshwa made demands on the revenues of Bengal in his negotiations with the Nizam at Bhopal in 1738. He considered the region from Nagpur to Bengal as his special field of activity. His brilliant successes in Karnatak had strengthened his claims which had the full support of Shahu. It would be recalled that Shahu had granted him a Sanad to that effect. Raghuji dreaded the new Peshwa's ambitious views towards the province and decided to forestall him by at once sending his army eastward. He was naturally anxious to have an independent field for his activities. He, therefore, readily accepted the offer made to him by Mir Habib and some of the officers of the Nawab of Bengal for invading Bengal. This was a very tempting offer to Raghuji, who had been waiting to extend his sphere of influence to the east of Nagpur. Being jealous of Raghuji's rising power, the Peshwa also conceived a plan of taking a hand in the affairs of Bengal. Thus Raghuji and the Peshwa both tried to take Bengal in their possession. While Peshwa's object was money and supremacy, that of Raghuji was the acquisition of tribute, territory and political power for himself.(2) But Raghuji's Karnatak venture had brought him no gain owing to too many greedy rivals having

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2. We get vivid description of Maratha conquests of Bengal in S.P.D. XX, 24-29, 48-49; Aitihasik Patravayavahar, 35-36; Rajwade, op.cit., III, 184, 217, 535; VI, 168-171; Vad-Peshwa's Diaries, Balaji Bajirao, vol.I, pp.242-43; Siyar, op.cit., II, pp.117-130; Maharashtra Puran, translated by Tamarash Chandra.

entered that field, and he was now sunk over head and ears in debt due to his inflated army expenditure. Only one path of relief seemed to be open before him, namely, the plunder of Bengal, whose wealth was proverbial throughout India. Bengal had paid no chauth to the Marathas upto now.

It is said that when Rustam Jung went by ship to the Deccan, waited on the Nizam-ul-Mulk and begged him for aid, the latter out of his practical knowledge, sent a secret hint to the Marathas inciting them with greed for the money and property of Bengal. According to Siyar, "it was the Nizam-ul-Mulk,(3) who was the contriver and director of this trouble". "This Prince either instigated by the Nizam-ul-Mulk or prompted by what he knew of the weakness of the Empire, undertook to make an irruption into the kingdom of Bengal. His views were either to make a conquest of it, or at least to establish in it contributions to the full amount of the chauth, i.e. one fourth of the revenue, an odious yoke that had become established in many countries of Hindustan and Deccan, but from which Bengal had yet remained entirely free".(4)

The Emperor Muhammad Shah promised to pay the chauth to the Maratha General, who, however, perceiving the cowardice of the grandees of the court and sensible of the want of discernment of the minister made a treaty with both parties and remained

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3. Hussain Golam, Siyar-ul-Mutaqherin, Vol.I,p.375. Grant Duff also supports this view.
4. This seems to be incorrect, because the Nizam-ul-Mulk's name does not occur anywhere else.

faithful to both the court and the Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Emperor Muhammad Shah also might have thought fit to get rid of the Marathas by inducing them to go to Bengal. The wretched condition of Delhi monarchy warrants us in coming to such a conclusion.(5)

The Riyazu-s-Salatin,(6) however, refers to the fact that Mir Habib, the Commander-in-Chief of Murshid Quli Khan, after Murshid's defeat, went to Raghuji and incited him to the conquest of Bengal. Raghuji, taking advantage of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan's insecure position sent to Bengal his Dewan Bhaskar Pandit who was accompanied by Mir Habib.(7)

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5. Ganga Ram - Maharashtra Puran - lines 1-46. Translated into English by Tamarash Chandra, pp.4105. In the Bengali Mss. of Maharashtra Puran we find that Shahu demanded Chauth for Bengal from the then Emperor of Delhi (Muhammad Shah), who expressed his inability to comply with it on the ground that his authority was hardly recognised in the Province. The Emperor suggested that Shahu should himself invade Bengal for realising the 'Chauth'. The advice was accepted and Shahu directed Raghuji to take the responsibility by leading an army into Bengal for this purpose. He appointed his deputy Bhaskar Pandit to march at the head of a Maratha army. In Kavya Itihas Sangraha Patran Yadi, 19, there is mention of the letter which the Emperor wrote to Shahu.

Ganga Ram's description, however, of the cause of the raids does not fully tally with the historical facts.

6. Abdus Salam's edition on Riyazu-s-Salatin, p.337.

7. Mir Habib's playing a conspicuous, though ignominious, part in this incursion seems to be correct. Siyar mentions (on pp. 384 and 387 of Vol. I, op.cit.) that Mir Habib was still then with the Nawab. But he was playing a double game and it is quite likely that Mir Habib's secret instigations as well as the unsatisfactory position of the Nawab made Raghuji to send general Bhaskar Pandit to Bengal.

Bengal which was rich in varied resources, naturally excited the cupidity of the Marathas, who were then invading and plundering different parts of India. When the ambition of Raghuji, virtually an independent chief to dominate the affairs of his master Shahu at Satara had been foiled by Baji Rao I, the Peshwa, his eyes fell upon Bengal as a very suitable sphere for the exercise of his influence and for acquisition of wealth by the imposition of chauth.

Due to all these causes and circumstances Raghuji hurriedly took his leave of Shahu at Satara and came back to Nagpur. After his arrival he formed plans in consultation with his trusted lieutenant Bhasker Ram, who had directly arrived there from Trichinopoly with Chanda Saheb in his custody. A strong expedition was fitted out for proceeding into Orissa and Bengal. Bhasker Ram headed the party and himself left Nagpur in November with about 10,000 troops in the year 1741 A.D.

SECTION II

Raghuji's Bengal Invasions

The first invasion took place in the year 1742 A.D.(8) Bhaskar Ram marched through Ramgarh and plundered the district of Pachet (10 miles east of Ranchi).(9) At that time there were no

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8. According to N.N.Sahastrabudhe, the first attack of the Marathas over the Bengal took place in 1738 A.D. (Bhonslyanchya Bangalwaril Swarya).

9. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.210.

good roads for going to Bengal from Nagpur via Chhatisgarh. In between these two towns there were thick forests and mountains and forestry inhabitation. The good roads were only through Bihar. Thus Bhasker Ram first went to Bihar and thence to Bengal.

At that time the Nawab Aliwardi Khan had gone to Orissa. But as soon as he got the news of the arrival of the Marathas, the Nawab came back to Bengal. But by then the Marathas had already started looking in the district called Payaghat. The Nawab tried his best to obstruct the progress of the Marathas. He was surprised to learn of the Maratha movements and the activities of Mir Habib. He rapidly marched to Burdwan and formed his camp on the bank of Rani's lake outside the town. To his dismay, however, he found himself early next morning completely surrounded by the Marathas and was faced with utter starvation. Bhaskar Ram employed half his men in plundering and devastating the adjoining districts. To escape the miseries of this unbearable situation, the Nawab sent his agents to Bhaskar Ram begging for terms. Bhaskar demanded ten lakhs, which the Nawab declined to pay. Thereupon, the Nawab was hotly pursued by Bhaskar, making him utterly helpless on the way. He again sent piteous appeals to the Maratha Commander to release him, Bhaskar now demanded one crore as the price of the Khan's release. Again the terms were refused, but the Nawab managed to reach Katwa (10) with a scanty army. A fight took place in the year 1742 A.D. The Nawab was defeated by Bhaskar Ram. In this

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10. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. I, p.338.

battle Mir Habib was caught by the Marathas. Mir Habib from the very beginning was against the Nawab Aliwardi Khan. And as soon as the Nawab was defeated by Bhaskar Ram, thinking this to be proper opportunity, he himself came to Bhaskar Ram and was of great help to him during this invasion.

The Nawab Aliwardi Khan organised his army and at the end of the rainy season, he attacked Bhaskar Pant's camp at Katwa. The Marathas had no idea of this unexpected attack; they were unprepared. They left the battle field and fled away and at last they entered Orissa.(11) From there they sent letters to Raghuji

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11. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan himself, in a letter to Mahadevabhat Hingane, graphically describes how he beat back Bhaskar, the General of Raghuji and chased him upto Atharpur Khurda. The letter is as follows:-

"Fortunately I have struck blows and chased Bhaskar from Katwa to Pachet, thence to Medinipur, from thither to Katak and from there to Atharpur Khurda and thus cleared off both the Subahs of Bengal and Orissa of the Marathas. He has disappeared by way of Sambalpur. During the enemy's retreat several battles took place in which the enemy could not stand and ran away like a jakal. For the present I am returning to Murshidabad. As the Emperor indeed approves of the destruction and the punishment of Bhaskar and Raghuji and as Bhaskar is returning safely, you should first represent the case in detail to the Pandita (Peshwa) and prevail upon him to proceed to the side of Devgarh Chanda, chastise Bhaskar and block the way of Raghuji if he turns to that side. People will thus be spared of calamity and the Emperor will much appreciate this action of his". (Aitihasik Pharsi Sahitya Vo.IV, No.24. Translated by G.H.Khare from Persian documents in Poona Daftar).

In Maharashtra Puran there is difference in the narration of the circumstances which led to the first departure of Pant from Bengal. (English translation of this book by Tamarash Chandra, p.5). Also see Graham,D.C.,Statistical Report of the Principality of Kolhapur, p.492.

for help. Raghuji organised his army, left his camp and marched towards Bengal to help Bhaskar Pant. But by the defeat of Bhasker Pant he had to return to Nagpur.(12) This victory raised the Nawab Aliwardi's reputation. The Maratha General was alarmed. It was difficult now for him to keep his footing in Bengal, specially as the rainy season had set in. But this was opposed by Mir Habib. He would not allow his parting with Bengal on so easy terms, and offered on alluring plan of a sudden attack upon Murshidabad and seizing its immense wealth, a prospect which Bhaskar Ram after some persuasion accepted. Mir Habib himself undertook the venture(13) He attacked Murshidabad and looted the city.(14) He took two and a half crore of rupees from the Kothi of Jagat Seth Alamchand. He collected all what he could loot and came back to Bhasker Pant.(15) Bhaskar was convinced of the fact that it was quite profitable to stay in Bengal during the rainy season. He captured Hooghly city and established his rule at Katwa and Medinipur etc. He resolved to make Katwa his headquarters. From that time Mir Habib became his Prime Minister and used to transact business sometimes at Katwa and sometimes at Hooghly. The Marathas ravaged all Bengal south of the Ganga. In this manner Orissa, Medinipur, Burdwan and part of

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12. Vaidya Daftar - Vol.IV, No.30.
13. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.393.
14. Ibid., S.P.D. New Series I, Ch. 5, No. 59.
15. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.393. It refers to two crores of rupees.

Rajshahi and even the town and district of Akbar-Nagar-Raj Mahal became possessed by the enemy; and nothing remained to the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, but the city of Murshidabad and the countries on the other side of the Ganga. "They set up outposts in many places and occupied the country from Rajmahal to Medinipur and Jelesar. All rich and respectable people abondoned their houses and migrated to the eastern side of the Ganges in order to save the honour of their women."(16)

When Bhaskar attacked Bengal, the officers of the Emperor came to the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to collect the taxes of Bengal. Because the Emperor had agreed to the proposal that the Marathas (Peshwa) should collect chauth in the territory under Imperial rule and gave the Sanad of Subahdari in Malwa to the Peshwa, only the actual handing over of documents were to take place. Thus, the Nawab indicated the unruly atmosphere created by Bhasker Pant and expressed his inability to pay the taxes due to the excessive loss caused by Bhasker Pant's invasion. He demanded military help from the Emperor for his protection. Being aware of the fact that the relation between the Peshwa and the Emperor were cordial he also demanded money for the military expenses and the Peshwa's help.(17) The Emperor ordered Safdar Jang, the Nawab of Oudh, to go to the

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16. Salimullah, Riyaz-us-Salatin, 120a; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, pp. 121-122; Ali, Yusuf, Ahwal-i-Mahabat Jung, p.45.

17. Khare, G.H., op.cit., No.23.

help of the Nawab in Bengal. Similarly he requested the Peshwa to protect the Nawab from the Marathas and ordered the Nawab to give money to the Peshwa for the army expenses out of the income of Bengal.(18) The Emperor wrote to Baji Rao, the Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha forces, "that as great sums accrued to his benefit from the payments made to him by the Imperial treasury on account of Chauth and those payments were likely to suffer greatly from the ravages made in Bengal by the insolent free booters, sent thither by Raghuji under the command of Bhaskar Pandit, it was proper he should repair thither to inflict such a chastisement on those plunderers as might deter them from ever reviewing their insolencies again".(19)

The Nawab Aliwardi Khan also tried to seek the help of the Raja Sawai Jaisingh of Jaipur in expelling the Marathas out of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He also requested him to persuade Balajirao, the third Peshwa, to help him against the Maratha incursions into Bengal, and to prevail upon him to proceed to the side of Devgarh, Chanda, chastise Bhaskar, and to block the way of Raghuji, if he turned to that side. The Peshwa, thereupon, proceeded

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18. Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.VI, No.170.

19. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.401.

through the province of Allahabad, and marched straight to Boglipur and arrived at Murshidabad.(20) Raghuji with a powerful army was advancing as an enemy from the eastward. After capturing Katak, he went to Murshidabad.(21) The Peshwa also tried to prevent Raghuji from proceeding towards Patna.(22) Balaji pressed for the settlement of accounts with the Nawab before he would take the field. Payment being promised the Peshwa agreed to expel Raghuji out of Bengal.(23) Raghuji who had by that time arrived between Katwa and Burdwan, decamped as soon as he heard that a settlement had taken place, and he retreated towards the hills. The Peshwa also overtook, attacked, and defeated Raghuji's army.(24) Raghuji communicated from Nagpur to the Vaidya brothers the details of his own and the Peshwa's movements in the regions of Bengal and Murshidabad.(25) Bhaskar Pant retreated through Orissa. The Peshwa after his victory returned to Malwa, in order to secure the long promised government.(26) The very rapidity of Raghuji's retreat was a menace to his victorious opponent. The Peshwa was fearful of an active

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20. S.P.D. XX, 28.
21. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No. 16.
22. S.P.D. XX,26.
23. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.420; Bengal letter,August 13,1743.
24. Ganga Ram is silent about the Peshwa's and Raghuji's attack of Bengal in person.*Kavya Itihas Sangraha Patren Yadi, No.246,pp. 218-220, cited by S.M.Garge, Karweer Riyasat, p.151.*English translation of Maharashtra Puran, by Tamarash Chandra, p.6.
25. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.18; S.P.D.XX, 26. The mutual dealings and fights between the two during the summer months of 1743 are graphically narrated in this letter of Vaidya Daftar.
26. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.429.

combination between Raghuji and the Gaikwad,(27) while he himself was busy, far from home.

Shahu sensed the effects of this mutual jealousy and enemity between these two Sardars, so he called both of them to Satara. But it was suspected that the Peshwa might harm Raghuji, therefore, Raghuji came to Satara with great caution.(28) By the effort of Shahu both Raghuji and the Peshwa were reconciled. A treaty was signed between the two in the autumn of 1743, defining the spheres assigned by the King to the management of Raghuji and the Peshwa.(29) Patna was retained by the Peshwa and Bengal was handed over to Raghuji. All the territory from Berar to the east right up to Katak, Bengal and Lucknow, was assigned to Raghuji, with which the Peshwa bound himself not to interfere; and the territory west of this line including Ajmere, Agra, Prayag and Malwa was to be the exclusive sphere of the Peshwa. Thus the Peshwa and Raghuji both bound themselves to

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27. Damaji Gaikwad was creating disturbances in the Maratha Kingdom. With the help of his army he was looting the people of Khandesh. Therefore, Mahipat Rao Kavade was appointed to look after the affairs of that province. It was rumoured that Raghuji had gone over to Damaji and both were intending to go to Satara. (Aitihasik Sankirna Sahitya, Vol.IV, pp.55-56).

28. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.21.

29. Sane, K.N., Thorle Shahu Maharaj Charitra,pp.74-75;82. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.21; S.P.D. XX,31; Chitnis Bakhar, p.79; Aitihasik Patravayavahar, pp.35-39; Rajwade, V.K.,op.cit.,Vol.IV, p.44; Nagpur Records, pp.1-10; Bharatvarsha, Vol.VI, pp.46-47. But according to Duff, the Peshwa had to make, under certain circumstances, his election between war with the Maratha Chief or the resignation of Bengal to Raghuji. He chose the later alternative and a secret compact was entered into between him and Raghuji in 1744 in which the Raja was used as Mediator. (Duff, Grant, op.cit.,Vol.I, p.431.)

respect each other's boundaries and not to encroach on the spheres assigned to them. So this long standing rivalry of Raghuji with the Peshwa came to an end for the present and their relations were never noticeably strained during their life time. Thus during the rainy season of 1743, the Peshwa and Raghuji both became strengthened in their friendship and about the next Dussera time each undertook his own premiditated task. Raghuji at once proceeded from Satara to Nagpur and despatched Bhaskar Ram to complete his unfinished work in Bengal. Consequently in March 1744, Bhaskar Ram renewed the invasions of Bengal by way of Orissa and Medinipur. He was now in a fierce mood by reason of his having lost all his booty and camp property in his hurried flight from Katwa in 1742, and his having been expelled bag and baggage from Bengal by Balaji in 1743. Therefore, Bhaskar left Nagpur on his journey, fully equipped with men and material, and began his raid with brutal ferocity and the Nagpur troops ravaged through the country like mad dogs.(30). The news of this fresh invasion roused the Nawab to a sense of his own danger and drove him to adopt a dastardly plan of treachery against the Marathas. Since his accession to the Subahdarship the Nawab had been so overwhelmed by worries, difficulties and disasters of an unprecendented character that he found himself altogether helpless in meeting the present danger. Bhaskar Ram and Mir Habib did their utmost to harass him in all possible ways. A demand for Chauth arrived from Bhaskar, with a threat of dire consequences in

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30. Ali, Yusuf, op.cit., p.63.

case of refusal. Out of his fertile brain the Nawab formed a dark plan of vengeance for overcoming Bhaskar Ram. He decided to entice him to a private meeting and have him murdered with all his party. For this he took into confidence his Afghan Commandant Mustafa Khan and his private counsellor Janki Ram, both bitter haters of the Marathas. The Nawab's health was failing and he had become tired of these wars with the Marathas . He resolved to get rid of such an enemy by some stroke of policy. So Bhaskar Ram was killed with twenty two of his principal officers by treachery at Mankera. The Marathas to a man were all despatched.(31)

The murder of Bhaskar Ram made his army fled without making a stand anywhere. Raghuji Gaikwad the sole survivor of the massacre who had galloped away with his contingent at the first tumult, reached the camp at Palashi and Katwa, and quickly set off for his home with the troops presented there, and with as much property and baggage as could be loaded quickly. Then the roving bands fled to Nagpur from every part of those provinces. Bengal and Orissa were thus cleared of the enemy at one blow. The three eastern provinces enjoyed peace and happiness for fifteen months after the death of Bhaskar Ram.

Raghuji was stunned with the blow, but soon recovered and concerted quick measures of revenge after holding anxious deli-

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31. Aitihasik Patravyavahar, No.426; Ganga Ram- Maharashtra Puran- lines 336 to 376. Its details tally with that of Siyar,op.cit. Vol.I, pp.431 to 436.

berations with his sons and Bhaskar Ram's brother, Kopher Ram. But he was in no position to avenge the murder of his generals immediately. His money difficulties had grown worse by now, and his old friction with the Peshwa had re-occurred in many quarters in violation of the compromise effected in 1743, because even after that agreement each was trying to encroach on the other's special sphere. The news of the murder of Bhaskar Ram was personally conveyed to Shahu by other Sardars. Shahu issued an order for the revenge of this murder. He ordered both the Peshwa and Raghuji to proceed to Bengal for this purpose. As per instructions the Peshwa joined Raghuji with his army. Then both proceeded towards Maksudabad. Janoji and Mudhoji, the sons of Raghuji, accompanied the Peshwa from Nagpur. They went to Maksudabad and recaptured Bengal, establishing peace there. The Peshwa returned back, but Janoji stayed there and conquered Orissa upto Puri. As a penalty of Bhaskar Ram's murder the Bhonsles conquered country worth fourteen lakh of rupees in taxes. After finishing this great task Janoji and Mudhoji returned back.(32)

After the massacre of Bhaskar Ram in 1744, a domestic revolution in 1745 turned the Nawab Aliwardi Khan's strongest allies the Afghans, into his bitterest enemies and the divided and weak condition of the province resulting from this internal dis-

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32. Aitihasik Patravyavahar, No.434. This letter is a proof that Shahu tried his best to reconciliate the Peshwa and Raghuji in the interest of the Maratha Raj. Both jointly went to conquer Bengal to take revenge of Bhaskar Ram's murder.

cussion lured the Marathas to renew their raids with a prospect of easy success which would have been otherwise impossible. When Mustafa Khan left Murshidabad in open mutiny, he wrote to Raghuji informing him of his intended invasion of Bihar and inviting him to cooperate in humbling the Nawab by repeating the Maratha raid. The opportunity was as tempting to Raghuji as it was unexpected. He immediately marched at the head of 14,000 horse to Orissa and captured the city of Katak, (33) without a blow. All Orissa upto Medinipur passed into the hands of the Marathas. Then Raghuji proceeded to Bengal.(34) He realised twentyfive lakh of rupees from the Nawab for "Mund Katai" of Bhaskar Ram.(35) The refugee Afghans were joined by the Marathas, whilst Raghuji was encamped in the Birbhum. The Afghans repeatedly submitted petitions written in the humblest terms to Raghuji to supplicate, "his taking the trouble of coming to their assistance; and they promised, in case of their being delivered from their loathsome habitation, to addict their whole lives to his service, without quitting his standards unless dismissed." (36) Raghuji finding his advantage in attaching to his person and cause some thousand Afghans, all old soldiers, equipped at all points, set out for Birbhum, sacked and plundered the towns of Ticcary and Shahpoor with their whole territory, and delivered the Afghans from their misery. His army by the junction

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33. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, no.26.
34. Ibid. Nos. 29, 31, 32 and 39. These letters describe in detail the expeditions, campaigns and movements of Raghuji into Bengal after the capture of Katak.
35. Junya Aitihasik Goshthi, Vol. II, p.54.
36. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. II, pp.6 to 7.

of the Afghans, amounted now to full 20,000 horses. Raghuji and his allies recrossed the Son at Arwal and moved north towards Patna, till they sighted the enemy two marches ahead of the capital.(37)

The Nawab Aliwardi Khan thought of getting rid first of the enemy nearest at hand, i.e. Mustafa Khan. But Mustafa Khan had retired to Chunar Ghar. So the Nawab continued his rout to Bengal, to be there in time against the incursions of the Marathas. But he had despatched beforehand Munnan Khan, as his ambassador to Raghuji. Raghuji was already on his march and he had entered the plains of Burdwan, when Munnan Khan overtook him and proposed a compromise by an agreement. But as Raghuji imagined that the proposal arose from mere necessity, he asked no less than three crore rupees for the murder of his twenty two brave captains. But the Nawab who was only endeavouring to gain time, spun out the negotiation by a variety of delays for two and a half months, in which time Raghuji did not move and matters went on slowly. As Raghuji was proceeding to Maksudabad, Mustafa Khan and the Nawab came to open blows, and Mustafa Khan was killed in a battle at Jagdishpur near Arrah in June 1745. The defeat and death of Mustafa Khan put it in the Nawab's power to reject Raghuji's unreasonable demands. The negotiation was broke off, and he immediately put himself at the head of his army. The Nawab arrived at Azimabad at the head of twelve thousand horse, all old soldiers, determined to put an

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37. S.P.D. XXVII,7 ; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.151; Yusuf,op.cit., pp.81 to 90; Ali Karam-Muzaffar Nawab-22b-23b and 31b.

end to his quarrel with the Marathas. A furious engagement took place between Mir Zafar Khan and the Marathas, in which the Marathas were giving way. A spent bullet knocked out a tooth of Raghuji, and two of his officers Mahimaji Baba and Shankaraji Baba were killed by cannon balls.(38) The enemy having been expelled from Bengal, Raghuji returned to his capital in April. Thus Bihar and Bengal enjoyed peace for a time but Orissa remained entirely in Maratha possession. Mir Habib REMAINED ~~continued~~ at Medinipur the whole season, and looted Hijili at the mouth of the Ganges and its neighbourhood.(39) In June Raghuji entered the Burdwan district from Orissa and seized seven lakh rupees as revenue. Immediately afterwards there was great confusion throughout West Bengal and "it prevented business from going on at several arangs." But a month later the raiders vacated the district and removed to Birbhum ~~xx~~ canton for the rains. Mustafa Khan was now dead, the Nawab was guarding Murshidabad in full strength. (40) But during the rainy season of 1746, the Maratha roving bands interrupted the coming of grain to Murshidabad by the northern route. The Nawab ascribed it to the negligence or treacherous collusion of the two Afghan generals (Shamshir Khan and Sardar Khan), whom he had posted to guard the roads. They were seemed to have formed a secret alliance with Raghuji for overthrowing the Nawab and sharing the three Subahs with the Maratha Raja. The Nawab dismissed them and later they

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38. S.P.D.XX, 74; S.P.D.XXVII, 11; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II,pp.13 to 14.
39. S.P.D. XXVII, 11; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.14.
40. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.14; S.P.D. XXVII, 11.

created a revolution in Patna a year and a half afterwards.(41)

Raghuji after leaving Bengal and Bihar in April 1746 came to Nagpur in September. (42) He was beset by his creditors. His son Janoji stayed at Nagpur with only one thousand men. So it was very difficult for Raghuji in his financial distress to fit out an expedition. A news-letter writer in his camp in Berar reported on December 8, 1746 "Raghuji is enlisting men, but is unable to pay them in cash. He has decided to send a force into Bengal under Janoji with the contingents of some officers, none of whom has actually more than hundred to five hundred men under him. They expect to muster ten thousand, which is very unlikely. (43) Thus there was delay in the Raja's reinforcing Mir Habib in Orissa.(44) Janoji reached Katak with his own army and started northwards in order to reinforce Mir Habib. But Mir Zafar, the favoured and trusted general of the Nawab, lost heart and without making any attempt to hold Medinipur fled to Burdwan. Thus the Nawab was left

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41. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II.pp.154 to 156.
42. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV- No.23- it refers that Raghuji arrived at Nagpur from Bengal expedition on 2.6.1746.
43. S.P.D.XX, 41 and 44.
44. The Peshwa also wanted to organise a campaign of Patna. "He wrote to Ramchandra Baba to proceed to Patna in December-January of 1746 and 1747. That would give them an opportunity for pressing their demands for the money for which they were negotiating with the Emperor for the last four years. The campaign would also give them an opportunity of increasing their influence over there and in some other states. It would also give them credit for achieving the victory and would restore peace in Bengal, beside getting some money also. If they did not go there, then they would be put in a false position. It would be a great loss to them and the credit would go to Raghuji. His supporters were watching for an opportunity of that kind of action, and. Raghuji would become more active and his influence in Darbar would be increased. Therefore, they should be more particular,

alone to face the united Afghans and the Marathas. But nothing daunted this old man of seventy one. He personally took command of his army and defeated Janoji in a severely contested battle near Burdwan known as the battle of RaniSarai, in March 1747.(45) The Maratha army suffered a heavy loss, and they had not the heart to face him again in the field. They fled back to Medinipur. The Nawab's victory was complete.(46) At the approach of the rainy season the Nawab returned to his capital. For a year after the victory of Rani-Sarai, Bengal and Bihar enjoyed a respite from the Bargi visitation, but Orissa from Medinipur southwards remained in the undisputed possession of the Marathas. Meanwhile,Mir Habib with a number of Maratha followers desired to attack Dacca from the side of Sunderban. "The Chief of the Council of Dacca states that the city of Dacca is in the utmost confusion on account of the Durbar having received advices of a large force of Marathas coming in by the way of Sunderban and that they were advanced as near as Sundra Col. when first described by their Hurmrrahs....".(47)

On hearing the intention of Mir Habib to attack Dacca, the Nawab Aliwardi Khan ordered Hussain Quli Khan, Deputy Governor of

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attentive, and careful. If they were not in a position to go there, ~~then~~ that would create a very bad impression and would put them in a bad position". (Aitihasik Patravayavahar, No. 48.)

45. Vaidya Daftar, Vol. IV. No. 11; S.P.D.II.4.

46. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.165-168; Yusuf, op.cit., pp.120-130; Karam, op.cit., 34 b- 36 b.

47. Consultations, March 1748.

Dacca, to proceed to that place for checking the advance of the Marathas. Hussain Quli obeyed his orders and by proper defensive measures prevented the advance of the Marathas to that side.(48)

The Nawab, however, did not fare better for all his measures to obtain relief from the Bhonsle menace. Raghuji got so involved in troubles of various kinds (49) that for long he could not attend to Bengal. He was called to Satara by Shahu. In the meantime Janoji who was campaigning in Bengal had to return to Nagpur on account of his mother's death.(50) Raghuji, therefore, despatched his third son Sabaji to Bengal,(51) to strengthen Mir Habib. Both Sabaji and Mir Habib did their best to harass the Nawab in all possible ways. The situation became so intolerable to the Nawab that his shrewd wife pressed him to come to a compromise with the Marathas. So a treaty was concluded between the two in March 1751.(52) For the arrears of Chauth the Nawab paid thirty two lakh of rupees to the Bhonsle at once. No amount was, however, recovered by way of fine for the murder of Bhaskar Ram and his

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48. Wafa, Muhammad , Waqai-i-Fath Bangala or Waqai-i-Mahabat Jang. English translation in "Bengal Past and present" Vol.48. The author got this fact from an English Record.

49. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, Nos. 7 & 22. Raghuji could not give financial aid to the Bengal Campaign. So many of his trusted lieutenants came back to Nagpur.

50. Ibid., No.22.

51. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II., p.77. He mentions the name of Bimbaji the younger son of Raghuji, for joining Mir Habib in Bengal.

52. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.112-113; Yusuf,op.cit.,p.180;Parasnis, Itihas Sangraha , Vol. VII, Nos. 4-6; also cited in Chitnis Shahi Charitra pp.134-135; Pratinidhi Gharanyacha Itihas,vol IV, pp.213-214. For the terms of treaty please see pp.183-184, of this thesis.

See Appendix - IX.

colleagues, but the main purpose of his expedition, viz., the imposition of the Chauth upon Bengal and Bihar was accomplished, and the possession of Katak was ensured. This treaty of peace restored tranquility and security in Bengal.

SECTION III

Effects of Bengal Invasions

Raghuji's Bengal campaigns were a hazardous enterprise. Several servants of Raghuji were engaged in the affairs of Bengal.(53) These Bengal campaigns engaged his attention for full ten years i.e. from 1741 to 1751, but the net gain was the province of Orissa and the imposition of Chauthai over Bengal.

It was during these years that the historic dispute between Raghuji and the Peshwa, because of the clash of their interest, arose. This Bengal affair opened before the world the strained relationship between Raghuji and the Peshwa. Raghuji and the Peshwa had not been always on good terms: the rivalry between the two goes back to the days of Peshwa Baji Rao I. The sphere of influence of Raghuji and the Peshwa came into conflict when Baji Rao secured one third part of Bundelkhand for the timely help rendered to Chhatrasal against the Mughals. Raghuji did not help the Peshwa in Bhopal campaign, and that was against the agreement. Till then both had come

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53. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.23.

to blows in a mild and secret manner. But in Bengal they clashed openly and bitterly. The Peshwa tried to put a spoke in the wheel of Raghuji's progress in the east.

This also showed the condition of the Maratha Raj and the power and authority which the King exercised over his Prime Minister and other Sardars. Shahu too often found it difficult to exercise control when two or more of his high servants were at sixes or sevens. The lack of a strong central authority was the serious defect from which the Maratha power suffered in the post Shivaji period. Their differences were settled by the mild Shahu, who divided the spheres of activity of the two by granting Raghuji the territory from Nagpur to Katak, and to the Peshwa to the west of this line.(54) Thus, Raghuji was reconciled with the Peshwa and Balaji resigned Bengal to Raghuji.(55)

The Peshwa gained many advantages by these invasions. He communicated to the Emperor his readiness to help him if the Chauth of Malwa, Bundelkhand and Allahabad was granted to him. The Emperor agreed to the Peshwa's proposal and asked him to proceed to Bihar and Bengal in order to help the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to resist the Bhonsle's aggression. The Emperor also ordered the Nawab to pay the Peshwa's expenses. The Nawab complied with the order, and a sum of twenty two lakh rupees was paid to him. Out of this sum, the Nawab sent a small amount to the Peshwa at once and invited him

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54. Bharatvarsha -No. 6, pp. 46-47.

55. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I,p.431.

for a meeting. The Peshwa began a continuous and adroit game. On the one hand he tried to put down Raghuji and on the other hand he tried to deal effectively with the northern possession of the Emperor. He tried to reap the greatest advantage out of these Bengal invasions. This was highly advantageous to the Nawab also, as it led to a discord between the two leading Maratha chiefs- the Peshwa and the Bhonsle. But the Nawab was befooled by the Peshwa. Formerly the Peshwa had assured the Nawab to help him, whenever the Marathas raided the province. But the Nawab was utterly bewildered by this revival of the Maratha menace. Only a year ago he had paid a huge subsidy to Balaji on condition that the Peshwa would effect an enduring settlement with Raghuji and ensure Bengal against all risks of Maratha raids in future. The Peshwa had, no doubt, driven Raghuji out of the province for the occasion i.e. in 1743 A.D., but next year they appeared again as before. The reason was that in the meantime these two Maratha chiefs had met together at their King's court and Shahu had imposed upon them a compromise dated August 31, 1743, by which the four Subahs of Malwa, Agra, Ajmer and Bhojpur in Subah Berar, yielding twelve lakh rupees a year, were assigned to the Peshwa, while Raghuji was to enjoy two Subahs of Bengal and Orissa and Oudh in their entirety, and whole of Bihar except the Mahals yielding twelve lakhs reserved for the Peshwa and each was strictly forbidden to interfere with the other's share.(56) This meant in effect that the province was merely partitioned between these two Maratha leaders as their respective spheres of influence; each of them simply contracted not to encroach on the

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56. Aitihasik Patravayavahar, Nos. 35 and 36.

other's special hunting ground, but was left free to do what he liked in his own part of the subah, without any moral or legal responsibility to protect the payer of the black mail in the other parts of his dominion.

The Nawab found that in return for all his expenditure he had now get not an assured protector, but two blood suckers instead of one. The Peshwa's breach of his promise and callous desertion of the Nawab's cause threw the Nawab into an agony of despair and rage. His own situation was well nigh desperate. His government was bankrupt. His soldiers were worn out by the fatigue of campaigning every year. The frequent Maratha invasions had affected the Nawab morally, physically and financially, and thus weakened his position to a considerable extent. Therefore, he tried to avoid by all means any new campaign against the Marathas.(57) He, therefore, took the bold and drastic step of murdering the Maratha General and his Sardars. Bengal and Orissa were thus cleared off the enemy at one blow. The three eastern provinces enjoyed peace and happiness for fifteen months after the death of Bhaskar Ram.

Raghuji gave help to the rebellious Afghans, who had revolted against the Nawab Aliwardi Khan. They requested Raghuji to come quickly for crushing the wicked Nawab. Thus, due to the Marathas, the Afghans under Mustafa Khan were encouraged to revolt against the Nawab. They also took advantage of these annual

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57. Sarkar, J.N., Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol.I, pp.58-59.

Maratha raids and the Nawab's troubles. "The rebellion of the Nawab's Afghan soldiers and their alliance with the Marathas added to the gravity of the situation. They usurped Patna and held it for three months."(58) Even Mir Zafar rose against the Nawab with the result that there was again unrest and confusion throughout the Bengal.

These Bengal invasions told upon the finance of Raghuji. He was always in debt and his soldiers were always demanding their pay, which Raghuji was unable to disburse. That is why many of his old and trusted soldiers refused to accompany him in the Bengal campaigns or to come back from there.(59) His creditors Vaidya brothers (60) also complained about their money.(61) Raghuji did not even pay the dues of Shahu in spite of his demands and avoided to pay a visit to Shahu at Satara.(62) Raghuji tried to fill his treasury by these invasions, but the result was reverse of his expectations. He became bankrupt. But he was ~~also~~ able to clear off his debt from the money which he had brought from Bengal. In accord-

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58. Datta, K.K., - Fort William - Indian House correspondence-introduction IV, pp.5 & 6.
59. Vaidya Daftar, Vol. IV, Nos. 7 & 8.
60. Ibid., Vol.III, No.67.
61. Ibid. Vol. V, No. 3; Selections from the Satara Rajas and the Peshwa's Diaries I, Shahu Chhatrapati-Nos. 164, 165, 166 and 167.
62. Ibid. (Vaidya Daftar) Vol.IV, Nos. 18, 21, and 44. Raghuji cleverly avoided the payment after repeated despatch of special messengers and agents by Shahu. He did his best to call Raghuji to pay off his debts. Shahu believed that Raghuji had amassed vast wealth from Bengal and demanded a share in it to pay off his debts.

ance with Raghuji's letter, the money of Chauthai which Shivbhat Sathe brought from Bengal was to be distributed amongst the money-lenders who gave loans to Raghuji.(63)

The same was the case with the Nawab. The Nawab's government was at its wits end for money due to these frequent Maratha raids. The three annual raids had caused an enormous loss of wealth and shrinkage of revenue. As the Peshwa's agent at the court of the Nawab told him in December 1746, "Raghuji after coming to your country has plundered and destroyed ten times the value of the Chauth of the province."(64)

Due to these annual Maratha raids, the Emperor Muhammad Shah agreed to make peace with the Marathas by promising Raja Shahu twenty five lakh of rupees as the chauth of Bengal, and ten lakhs as that of Bihar. These amounts were to be annually transmitted by the Subehdar from Bengal to Delhi and there handed over to the agents of the Maratha King. So later on a conflict arose between the Peshwa and Raghuji over the Chauth of Bengal.(65) The Peshwa wanted to realise the chauth from Bengal, but it was promised to Raghuji by Shahu. But when the Maratha envoy on behalf of the Peshwa came to Bengal to realise the Chauth of Bihar, then Nawab replied, "Patna is mine, Bengal too is mine, I ought to act treating

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63. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.44 of 1755.
64. Sarkar, J.N.,- Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol.I, p.61.
65. S.P.D. XX, 29.

both provinces as one. The Chauth for the two is inseparable". The Maratha envoy objected, saying, "How can the Peshwa's Chauth and Raghuji's be considered as one and indivisible thing? The latter is your enemy; entering your realm he has plundered and destroyed ten times the amount of the Chauth. The Peshwa on the other hand has been entirely your friend. He gave you armed help in the past, and since then he has been exerting himself to settle your affair. He has done his work; you now do yours and regulate your realm. If you fully pay up the subsidy for Bihar, then there will be no delay in despatching your affair." The Nawab closed the discussion by saying that all his trust was in the Peshwa, and that the business would be done after the Peshwa had considered the written representation he was sending to him about the position of his government. He evaded making any definite promise of payment.(66) In fact the Nawab's policy was that he was not prepared to make a separate agreement for the Bihar Chauth with the Peshwa, in the absence of guarantee to the effect that, the Peshwa on being satisfied as to his own gain, would not leave Raghuji a free hand to raid and tax Bengal and Orissa, instead of defending the three provinces together. This was the Emperor's object in promising the chauth. The entire chauth should be payable to one authority and not two separate amounts payable to two mutually independent enemy chiefs. Thus Bengal was the constant cause of conflict between Raghuji and the Peshwa. Raghuji had by his repeated invasions stopped the annual flow of revenue from Bengal into the Imperial treasury. That also gave rise to a conflict between Raghuji and the Peshwa. Therefore,

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66. S.P.D.XX, 39 and 49.

the Peshwa and his agents quietly worked themselves into the Emperor's favour and the Emperor came to depend upon the Marathas in case of emergency.(67) The Emperor entertained the fear about Raghuji invading Bengal and stopping the Bengal revenues coming to Delhi.(68) And it happened so, because of the arrival of Raghuji's army in his territory, it became difficult to realise tribute from the Nawab of Bengal. The Nawab complained to the Emperor the arrival of Raghuji's troops in his territory.(69)

The condition of the people was pitiful due to those invasions. "To avert death by starvation, human beings ate plantain roots. Katwa was ravaged by the Marathas. Haji Ahmad, the Nawab's brother sent rations in boat."(70) Bengal and the capital Murshidabad were plundered by the Marathas. (71) The ravages of the Marathas, as described by Ganga Ram, covered an extensive area. But it was chiefly the present Burdwan and Presidency Division which suffered most from the cruelties perpetrated by the Marathas. Inhuman cruelities were committed upon the helpless people, whose limbs were chopped off and many of whom were mercilessly slaughtered.(72)

Another contemporary writer, Vareshwar Vidyalankar; the

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67. S.P.D. II.4.
68. Ibid., 10.
69. Ibid., New Series I, SR 7, 85.
70. Ganga Ram- Maharashtra Puran, lines 153 to 190; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.392; Riyaz, op.cit.p.341. The account of both these two writers tallies with that of Ganga Ram.
71. Ganga Ram, op.cit., lines 191 to 250.
72. Ibid., pp.6-11, (English translation by Tamarash Chandra).

Court Pandit of the Maharajah of Burdwan, wrote in November, 1744, "Shahu Rajahs troops are ringgard of pity, slayers of pregnent women and infants, of Brahmans and the poor, fierce of spirit, expert in robbing the property of everyone and in committing every sinful act. They created a local cataclysm and caused the extirpation of the people of the Bengal village like one comet. In one day they can cross a hundred yojans. They slay the unarmed, the poor, women and children. They rob all property. If it comes to a battle, they secretly flee away to some other country. Their main strength lies in their marvelously swift-horses. Such was the tumultuous ocean of Bargi troops."(73)

The Muslim historians Salimullah and Ghulam Husain Salim confirm this account. They write, "The Bargi's cut off the ears, noses and hands of multitudes of people, or killed them with many kinds of torture and suffering by gagging their mouths with bags of dust or drowning them. They destroyed the honour of the people." The letters from the French factory at Chandranagar and the English settlement of Calcutta tell the same tale of oppression.(74)

The reported Maratha inroads produced some significant consequences. They not only embarrassed the Nawab Aliwardi Khan's government, but also proved to be a terrible calamity to the province of Bengal with adverse effects on the economic life of its

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73. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, p.50.

74. Ibid., p.50.

people in all respects.

The Maratha invasions created terror among the European traders in Bengal. Their trade was effected by Maratha incursions, and Afghan insurrection.(75) Consequently, the traders in Bengal and Bihar suffered some loss on account of these invasions. "The Busign English and his party had been attacked by the Marathas at Katwa and were defeated and goods under his charge had been plundered".(76) The English Merchants of Calcutta write, "An entire stop was put to our business for sometime at Calcutta, Casimbazar and Patna". The defensive measures at Calcutta are thus described. "On the Maratha's return here on 17th March, 1743, we (the English) ordered the batteries to be put in good order and entertained a hundred Baksaries. We raised a militia of the inhabitants on 4th April. The merchants proposed at their own expense to dig a ditch round the town to secure their homes. The Council agreed there to on 29th March and lend them Rs.25,000 on four persons' security to repay it in three months; which is completed as far as the Great Road that leads from the Fort Gate towards the Lake and is begun to be carried on as far as the extent of the company's bound at Govindpur." This was the origin of the famous Maratha Ditch of Calcutta.(77) At Patna the Naib Nazim, Zaiuddin Ahmad Haibat Jang,

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75. Datta, K.K., Fort William - India House Correspondence Letters Nos. 45, 77, 89, 92, 96, 104, 106, 160 and 163 dated December 30, 1750.

76. Datta, K.K., op.cit., letter dated, February 24, 1747-48.

77. Bengal Letter, February 3,1744; Ganga Ram, op.cit., p.134. (English translation in "Bengal Past and Present, No.48).

constructed a mud wall round the city.

Due to these frequent Maratha invasions on Bengal the Nawab fell in money difficulties. He had to increase his defensive forces to an immense extent; and his army bill alone amounted to one crore and eighty lakh of rupees a year. The result was that bankruptcy stared him in the face and he was driven to raise money by any means fair or foul. The European traders had to make financial contribution to the Nawab only when the latter was called upon to meet the extraordinary needs occasioned by the Maratha raids and Afghan insurrection. So in 1743 he had levied a war-tax of rupees two thousand from each of the three European nations trading in dominions, but it was a mere drop in the ocean of his need. Early in July 1744, he made a very extraordinary demand on the English Chief of the Qasimbazar factory, "setting forth that the English carried on the trade of the whole world; they formerly used to have but four or five ships, but now brought forty or eighty sails, which belonged not to the company; that for five years he had done them daily service, but they had him not in remmberance, and now that he was engaged in defending the country against the Marathas, instead of assisting him they supplied the enemy with powder and ball. He,therefore, ordered them to repair from doing any business at any place unless they supplied him with two months pay for his troops, amounting to about three million of rupees". Three days afterwards (10th July) the Nawab set peons on the European merchants at Murshidabad and issued orders to all parts of the country to stop trading by the Europeans.(78) "Horse and

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78. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, pp.61 to 62.

foot were gone to impede business at the gara arangs (i.e. the factories of coarse cotton cloth). The Nawab went on seizing and whipping every person. Preet Cotmah was tortured till he agréed to pay rupees one lakh and thirty five thousand and was then delivered to another tormentor to make him agree to three lakhs. The English Company's Vakils were kept two days at the Durbar without eating".(79) But the English Company, in order to reopen their business in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, were at last (October, 1744) glad to beat the Nawab down to rupees three and a half lakh, beside which they had to pay rupees thirty thousand and five hundred to his generals and officers in Murshidabad, rupees eight thousand at Patna, and rupees five thousand at Dacca.(80)

The French at Chandranagar suffered equally, considering the small value of their trade in comparison with that of the English. In December, the Chandranagar council was faced with the Nawab's demand for one lakh of rupees and had ultimately to pay rupees forty five thousand, under the name of a loan. So, the superior council of Pondicherry issued absolute orders to levy on the inhabitants of the French village in Bengal a tax which was estimated to yield rupees twenty five thousand. Thus,the pressure in the last resort was passed on to the helpless Indian peasants, as it always the case.(81) The admiration and goodwill of the Marathas won by Dumas during their invasion of the Karnatak stood

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79. Bengal letter of November 8, 1744.
80. Bengal letter of February 9, 1945.
81. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol. I, p.62.

the French in good stead during the Maratha invasion into Bengal. Raghuji's relations with the French were cordial since his invasion of the Karnatak in 1740-41. He had taken care not to disturb them during his incursions into Bengal. But the French establishments in Bengal suffered heavily. Though the Marathas had promised not to distrust the French,(82) but their incursions into Bengal threw the people in the province into a state of continuous alarm and consequently paralysed all commercial transactions. People dared not invest their money because of an uncertain and perilous future, and the French felt anxious about their commerce at the news of the Maratha incursions of Bengal. They also decided to observe strict neutrality between the Nawab and the Marathas, although the former was pressing the European settlers to assist him.(83) In October 1742, the Marathas pillaged the province but did not interfere with the French colony at Chandranagar.(84) As precautionary measure against the danger to their colony, the French formed a defensive and offensive alliance with the Dutch Company in Bengal. The English kept themselves aloof, perhaps because they were contemplating a war with the French in Europe.

The French establishments in Bengal lived in a state of permanent insecurity due to the periodic erruptions of the Maratha force into the province. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan had paid for their retreat in 1742, but they returned to the province in 1743. These

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82. Martineau Jean Law de Lauriston, p.XLV, states that the Marathas had guaranteed the inviolability of the French establishments in India.

83. Catalogue III, p.7.

84. Martineau Correspondence III, p.430.

invasions and the threats resulting from them paralysed in general the trade of the European nations.(85)

In 1744, the attack of the Marathas was sudden from the side of Orissa, so the French could not carry away their documents etc., and to protect against these invasions, they were compelled to undertake costly measures. (86) In the attack of 1745, some of the troops of Mir Habib attempted to enter the French boundary, but were repulsed with a loss of fifteen men only. They had no interest in attacking the French settlement, so they moved northwards to join Raghuji.(87) In 1747, the Marathas established themselves along the river Ganges, demanding transit duties from all the steamers passing up and down the river. The French obtained a concession. In 1748, they reached the out-skirts of Chandranagar, but they did not disturb the French settlement.(88) Thus, the French establishments in Bengal took advantage of the Maratha campaigns in the Karnatak and both the parties maintained cordial relations here also.

The Marathas under the direction of Mir Habib requisitioned some of the ships from the Dutch port of Koga Moga on the bank of the river Hooghly, for transport purposes.(89) The Marathas,

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85. Catalogue III, p.93.
86. Catalogue III, p.100; Martineau IV, pp.41-43 and pp.47 to 48.
87. Martineau correspondence IV. pp. 47 and 127; Martineau "Dupleix" II, pp.100 to 101.
88. Martineau correspondence, p.348.
89. Ganga Ram, Maharashtra Puran, pp.6 to 11, (English translation by Tamarash Chandra).

under Janoji near Katwa, plundered the goods and treasure in the fleet of English factory, without any opposition from the escort. The Marathas left Katwa, carrying everything away from thence.(90) When the Peshwa invaded Bengal and came to Monghyr and Bhagalpur, two popular towns, the territory and inhabitants of which suffered exceedingly from the passage of his troops. Numerous had fled to the other side of Gaya.(91) We can just imagine the destruction of the villages and the loss of the income as some of the villages were in a highly flourishing condition at that time in Bengal.(92) Bhaskar Pant's violent methods were deeply resented by the populace of Bengal. But there was no organised effort amongst the people for resisting the reckless oppression of these inroads. The Nawab himself proved unequal to the task, shifting his camp from place to place for avoiding an open engagement with the enemy. A general panic was raised; even the very name of the Bargis was sufficient to make the people desert their houses in a body.(93)

Muhammad Wafa, the author of Waqai-i-Fath Bangala or Waqai-i-Mahabat Jang makes a significant reference (foil 18) that after the plunder of Murshidabad by the Marathas, some of the mahajans went away with their families to Dacca and many gentlemen proceeded with their wives and children to Maldah.(94)

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90. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, p.50.
91. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.418.
92. Ganga Ram, op.cit., p.7.
93. Ibid., p.11.
94. Bengal Past and Present, Vol.48, p.134.

No amount was, however, recovered by way of fine for the murder of Bhaskar Ram and his colleagues, but the main purpose of that General's expedition, viz., the imposition of the Chauth upon Bengal and Bihar, was accomplished and the possession of Katak was ensured. The treaty made by the Nawab with the Marathas and his payment of Chauth for Bengal and Bihar, though it did not bring perfect or immediate peace to Bengal and Bihar, achieved one happy result. It changed the character of the Bargi raids.(95)

There were many evil effects of the selfish policy of plunder and raid. It caused disunion and dissension within the Maratha empire. The Peshwa, in want of money, did not hesitate to sell his assistance to the Nawab of Bengal against Raghuji. Raghuji indeed, was not well disposed towards Balaji, but the moral effect of fighting a Maratha Sardar, while employed in a Mohammedan province, was simply disastrous.

The history of Bengal for ten years, i.e. from 1741 to 1751 is, therefore, the story of Nawab- Maratha struggle in the region, which became complicated on account of the jealousies and rivalries of powerful Maratha commanders. The political situation in Bengal added to the confusion caused by Maratha incursions. Except for temporary disturbances created by the raids of the Maratha horse, the province remained comparatively quiet and peaceful. The treaty of 1751 restored tranquillity and security to all the campaigns in Bengal.(96)

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95. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., p.99.
96. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. II, p.113.

CHAPTER V

THE CONQUEST OF ORISSA BY RAGHUJI

SECTION I

Reasons for the invasion:

There were many reasons for the advent of the Marathas in the province of Orissa. It was Kanhoji Bhonsle who first led an incursion into the territory of Orissa or Katak taking advantage of the chaotic conditions prevailing there. But he was defeated and sent to Satara as a prisoner by Raghuji Bhonsle.(1) "When Raghuji entered Orissa, he found that this State was divided into small zamindaris, dependent upon the Rajah of Poona, at whose capital is the famous temple of Jagannath(2) near the Chilka lake. This Prince was regarded by his subjects in a religious light also, and appeared favourable to the Marathas, who apprehensive lest he might seize a favourable opportunity to cut off the communication between Nagpur and Katak, resolved to reduce his power by dividing it".(3)

1. The political condition of Orissa was in a state of turbulence when Murshid Kuli Khan II was defeated at Balasore and fled

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1. Gazetteer of India, Maharashtra State, Nagpur District, revised edition, p.69.
2. Appendix- X.
3. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur territories, p.27.

to Muslipatam in 1740 A.D., his friend and faithful follower, Mir Habib, went direct to Raghuji Bhonsle of Nagpur to secure his assistance to drive out the treacherous Nawab Aliwardi Khan from Orissa and Bengal. The ambitious Raghuji was in search of such an opportunity so he readily agreed to the proposal.(4)

2. Raghuji Bhonsle, the Rajah of Nagpur, who failed to dominate over Shahu owing to the superior talent and ability of his rival, Baji Rao, was contemplating plunder of the land towards the north-east of his dominion.(5)

3. It was just possible that the Nizam-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad who was always in fear of Maratha raids was all the more instigating Raghuji in his design.(6)

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4. Mehtab, H.K.; The History of Orissa, Part I, p.108; Ray, B.C., History of Orissa under Marathas, p.10; Riyaz-u-Salatin mentions that Mir Habibullah personally went to Nagpur to persuade Raghuji to undertake the conquest of Bengal, whereas Siyar and Dutt mention that he was captured by the army of Bhaskar Ram. Bannerji on the authority of Marathi Riyasat writes,

> "Mir Habib went to invite the Marathas of Nagpur. Raghuji was absent on a campaign in the Karnatak, when Mir Habib went to Berar and fought Bhaskar Ram". (Bannerjee, R.D. History of Orissa, Vol.II, p.91).

In support of the account of Riyaz and Marathi Riyasat, we have Motto's narrative which mentions that, "Raghuji entered Orissa, at the instigation of Mir Habib, who had fled disgusted from Aliwardi's service since 1738." (Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.27).

5. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.208.

6. It is said that when Rustam Jung went by ships to the Deccan, waited on the Nizam-ul-Mulk and begged him for aid, the latter out of his practical knowledge, sent a secret hint to the Marathas, inciting them with greed for the money and property of Bengal. (Aliwardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal; by Karam Ali. Translated from the Persian text by J.N.Sarkar in "Bengal Past and Present", Vol. 67, p.4).

4. The principal object of the Marathas in plundering Orissa was to put pressure on the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to pay them Chauth. They found that the Muslim Governors in Orissa were either weak or disloyal to the Nawab. So they could easily defeat them and made Orissa a suitable base for launching frequent attacks on Bengal.(7)

Due to all these reasons, Raghuji sent a huge army under Bhaskar Ram, the son of Narayan Raoji and entrusted him with the task of invading the kingdom of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan.(8) Bhaskar entered into Orissa, possibly through Barmul Pass,(9) on the ill-defended western frontier, at the head of an army.(10) The fort of Barabati was taken on April 19, 1742.(11) Masum was embarrassed at the approach of the Marathas, whose strength was four times superior in number to his own men. He fled towards the mountains, leaving the country defenceless.(12) Then Bhaskar moved towards Panchet, Midnapur and Burdwan as far as Balasore. All these places were ruthlessly plundered and fell into his possession.(13) The Maratha detachments were busy in plundering countries as far as the river Ganges towards Murshidabad all through the rainy season.(14)

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7. Ray, B.C., op.cit., p.160.
8. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.375 to 376; Riyaz, op.cit., p.338, (Both English translation).
9. Appendix XI.
10. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.375 to 376.
11. Vaidya Dafter, Vol.IV, no.16.
12. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I,p.395.
13. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I,p.395; Riyaz,op.cit.,p.343,Bengal letter to Court dated October 30, 1742, paras 6 and 25.
14. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.396.

Section II

Orissa becomes a Maratha Province

Orissa was in this defenceless state when a great calamity occurred which entirely changed the whole current of its history. In the month of February, 1743, the Marathas from Berar entered the province of Orissa. After the defeat of Murshid Quli Khan by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan at Balasore in 1740, the traitor Mir Habibullah, Dewan of the former had secretly invited the Marathas to attack Orissa.(15) At this time Raghuji was the ruler of Berar, and held his court at Nagpur. Mir Habib's negotiations were made in the first instance with Bhaskar Pant, the Dewan of Raghuji. With his master's permission Bhaskar Pant made an attack upon them in the first instance with 12,000 horse and got as far as Pachet, before the Nawab Aliwardi Khan could rush down from Orissa to oppose him. Bhaskar Pant marched via Chhatisgarh to Chotanagpur and from there he marched upon Midnapur through the hilly tracts of Mayurbhanja.(16) The Nawab Aliwardi Khan was not prepared for this unexpected invasion and was, therefore, compelled to fly from Orissa to Bengal. While the unfortunate Nawab was thus driven out by the Marathas from Orissa his Afghan soldiers mutinied in order to take advantage of the situa-

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15. Hunter, Stirling, Beams and Shahu, A History of Orissa,p.301.
16. Mehtab, H.K., op.cit., p.108.

tion which had presented itself. The poor Nawab had to pacify his Afghan soldiers by holding out only great hopes and promises.(17)

The Maratha army consisted of 10,000 cavalry, while the Nawab's army was composed of only 4,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. Thus outnumbered by the Marathas, the Nawab Aliwardi Khan's army fled away in such confusion that most of its war materials, food stuff, and transport animals fell into the hands of the Marathas. It is stated that his Begum while making her escape on the back of an elephant was captured by the Marathas and her release was secured with great difficulty. A battle was fought at Katwa in which the Marathas were victorious and Mir Habib having been (probably on purpose) taken prisoner, at once installed himself as Bhaskar's adviser,(18) and enabled him to take possession of the town of Hughli, and subsequently overran the country as far as Midnapur. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan, however, was not discouraged. He again attacked the Marathas and drove them through Midnapore skirmishing as they retreated as far as Balasore. Here they made a stand and a battle took place on the high land, a little to the south of the camp of

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17. Mehtab, H.K., op.cit., p.108.

18. Karam Ali also supports this view. He writes that Habibullah Khan, who accompanied the Nawab in this campaign, by creating a false report of his having been slain, had kept himself aloof from the army, he had been from former times an enemy of the Nawab's family. The Marathas carried him with themselves. He incited them to plunder the capital, and taking two or three thousand soldiers of the Marathas army with himself, he started for Murshidabad.

    (Aliwardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal-translated from the Persian text of Karam Ali by J.N.Sarkar, published in "Bengal Past and Present", Vol.67, p.5).

Murshid Quli. The result of the battle was unfavourable to the Marathas, for they retreated to Katak, taking the opportunity, however, of plundering everything they could lay hands on as they went. From Katak they retreated through the hills of Berar.(19) From Bengal the Marathas marched into Orissa. Balasore was captured and plundered and the whole of Orissa readily submitted to them without any resistance. The atrocities committed by the Marathas were simply inhuman, "The very name 'Maratha' caused such terror in the minds of the people of all classes that they fled to the hills and forests on hearing it.(20) The greater part of Orissa, Midnapore, Burdwan, Rajashi and Rajmahal were in possession of the Marathas while only a small territory around Murshidabad remained in the hands of the Nawab.(21)

Soon after the rainy season, the Marathas were defeated by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan in an engagement near Katwa (22) from where they fell back to Ramgarh to ravage Orissa.(23) Masum had fled away from Katak at the first appearance of the Marathas. He got an opportunity of gathering strength and encamped at a place(24) near Katak with a number of men to oppose the Marathas. The

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19. Hunter etc., op.cit., p.302.
20. Mehtab, H.K., op.cit., p.109.
21. Ibid.
22. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I p.403; Riyaz, op.cit., p.345.
23. Ibid., pp.404 & 405; Ibid, p.348.
24. Ibid., p.405- This is called Harihaspur.

Marathas fell upon him and he was killed. Thus Katak together with fort of Barabati fell into their possession.(25) On hearing the news of the death of Masum, the Nawab marched with his army towards Midnapur. At this Bhaskar Pant was frightened. So he fled to Balasore. Hotly pursued by the Nawab's soldiers, he, with the Marathas, ran into Deccan by crossing Chilka on the southern boundary of Orissa.(26) The Nawab Aliwardi Khan stayed at Katak for about two months for restoring his authority. Abdul Nabi was made deputy Governor and Raja Durlabhram was appointed as his Peshkar or agent.(27)

Section III

Agreement between the Peshwa and the Nawab to rout Raghuji from Orissa

Soon after the departure of the Nawab, Raghuji invaded Orissa with a big army and captured Katak.(28) He left Bhaskar Ram at Midnapore.(29) He then proceeded to Katwa for exacting the Chauth of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Nawab. The helpless

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25. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.405, Riyaz, op.cit., p.346.
26. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, p.406; Riyaz, op.cit., p.347.
27. Ibid.
28. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, 1743, No.14; Bengal Letter to the Court dated August 13, 1743.
29. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. I, p.420.

Nawab now appealed to the nominal Emperor of Delhi for help. The Emperor, Muhammad Shah himself, had no power to render any assistance to the distressed Nawab of Bengal, but he had the wit to write touching letters to the Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao,(30) and to the Subahdar of Oudh to save the Nawab Aliwardi Khan from complete destruction. The Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao was a bitter enemy of Raghuji, who was his greatest rival in the Maharashtra for supremacy in the Maratha policy. Naturally, the irritated Peshwa wanted to avail of this opportunity for bringing about the ruin of his rival. In spite of enormous odds he now proceeded to the assistance of the Nawab.(31) He set out with 70,000 troops. The Nawab set out to welcome Balaji Rao, so that he might be impressed with the number and arrangements of the troops and the skill of their commanders.(32) The Nawab Aliwardi Khan made Siraj-ud-daullah exchange turbans with Balaji Rao and thus made him (Balaji) his son,(33) showed due respect to the Peshwa, and paid him much cash in lieu of the 'Chauth'. The Peshwa entered into a conference with the Nawab at Plassey on March 31, 1743, in which the latter agreed to pay the Chauth of Bengal to Raja Shahu, and twenty two lakh of rupees to Balaji for the expenses of his army.(34) The two allies decided to drive

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30. Ali, Karam, op.cit., p.8.
31. Mehtab, H.K., op.cit., p.109; Ali,Karam, op.cit., p.8; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.1, p.408.
32. Ali, Karam, op.cit., p.8.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., Bengal Letter to Court dated August 13, 1743.

Raghuji out of Bengal. Balaji Rao, on the plea of making greater speed, set out alone to put down the enemy. He pursued Raghuji upto Katak, but Raghuji in fear soon left Katwa and retreated. The Peshwa followed him and inflicted defeat on him, slew many of his men and returned safe to Poona; his capital. Bhaskar Pant also raised his camp from Midnapore and followed his master.(35) But with the remnant of his forces he marched again through Balasore, plundering and destroying as he went back to Berar.

Raghuji was next to the Peshwa as a most powerful Maratha noble of the time, and shortly after his return to his capital he marched on to Satara, and exorted from the puppet Raja a deed by which, while the rest of the countries under Maratha rule were retained by the Peshwa, to Raghuji himself were assigned the revenues of Oudh, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa.(36)

Section IV
Maratha's expulsion from Orissa

Soon after this the Peshwa and the Bhonsle came to terms, each agreeing not to interfere with the affairs of the other. Raghuji ceased to oppose the Peshwa in the Maratha Court of Satara,

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35. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. I, p.421.

36. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.431; Ray, B.C., op.cit., p.12.

and the Peshwa allowed Raghuji a free hand in Bengal and Orissa for conquest and collection of Chauth. In the cold weather of 1744, Raghuji sent his son Janoji with an army of 20,000 into Orissa, apparently by way of Sambhalpur. Mir Habib renewed his demand for Chauth from Aliwardi Khan, the Nawab of Bengal, Bhaskar Pandit reached the borders of Orissa and invaded it on his way to Bengal through Midnapur; the Nawab Aliwardi Khan met them at Midnapur, and being unable to cope with them in the field, proposed negotiations, and preferred treachery to an open war. According to the advice of Jankiram, the Nawab invited all the Maratha officers to his camp under the pretext of settling terms of peace. In November 1744 A.D. inside the Nawab's camp all the twenty two Maratha Officers including their leader Bhaskar Pant were treacherously murdered. It seemed to the Nawab that after this cold-blooded murder, the country would be free from the Maratha menace, but the Nawab was soon disillusioned. After the massacre, the Maratha army retreated in confusion through Balasore, and fled away to Nagpur from both Bengal and Orissa,(37) and was much harassed by the peasantry, who indulged in a guerilla warfare and cut off all stragglers without mercy.

In spite of the flight of the Marathas, the political condition of Orissa did not improve. Mustafa Khan rebelled against the Nawab Aliwardi Khan.(38) Abdul Nabi could not decide

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37. Bengal letter to Court dated August 3, 1744, pp. 435 to 436; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.436 to 437; Riyaz, op.cit., pp.348 to 349.

38. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I /pp.439 to 444; Riyaz, op.cit., pp.351 to 353.

as to which party he would join. He died in a state of mental embarrassment. He was succeeded by his son Abdul Rasool. But soon he left the service in response to a call from his uncle Mustafa to fight against the Nawab. Orissa was thus left without a ruler. At that time Raja Durlabhram the son of Nawab's Prime Minister Raja Jankiram, was appointed his Agent-General in Orissa. He had a brigade of 3,000 horse.(39) He was unfit for such an office. Scrupulously attached to his religious practices, he was much addicted to the company of Brahmans and Sanyasis. Most of those Sanyasis were Raghuji's spies. They were supplying information concerning the conduct of Raja Durlabhram and the weakness of his Government.(40) So he formed his scheme upon that knowledge. The Maratha Prince, since his Generals' murder, was like an untrodden snake retired within its hole, from where he watched the moment for revenge.(41)

Section V

Scramble between the Nawab and Raghuji for the possession of Orissa.

In order to take revenge on the Nawab Aliwardi Khan,

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39. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.445; Siyar op.cit., Vol.II, p.2
40. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.2.
41. Ibid., p.3.

Mustafa Khan invited Raghuji to invade Bengal. The opportunity was as tempting to Raghuji as it was unexpected. Raghuji, who never forgot the treacherous death of Bhaskar Ram, marched at this opportune time at the head of 14,000 horse, (42) and crossing the mountain tracts and leaving Sambhalpur on the left, reached Orissa in March 1745,(43) and captured the city of Katak without a blow. At the time when the Marathas reached the frontier of Orissa, Raja Durlabhram was busy with the Sanyasis on the shore of the river Mahanadi, without any knowledge of their approach. A general uproar having risen throughout the city of Katak. People began to fly and sought refuge. It was then and not till then that Raja Durlabhram, being awakened, came out half naked, without a turban, and in that condition got into his palanquin with the intention of taking shelter in the castle of Barabati, which was not far off.(44) Soon Raghuji arrived and besieged the fort. Durlabhram was not frightened and understood that no reinforcement was likely to be sent from the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, because of his expedition against the state. He was afraid only for his own life. So he soon decided to surrender under the influence and advice of some sanyasis, and some of his officers, in spite of vehement opposi-

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42. Ibid., Riyaz, op.cit., pp.349 to 350.
43. Siyar, op.cit., Vol. II, p.3; Vaidya Dafter, Vol.IV, 1745, No.22.
44. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.3.

tion by Mir Abdul Aziz and some others, who thought such a surrender dishonourable to their master, the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, and disgraceful to themselves, and they were for fighting and defending the place. Durlabhram was inclined to an agreement and he was deluded into it by his sahyasis at last.(45) After many conferences Raja Durlabhram came out of the fortress and went to pay a visit to the Maratha Prince, accompanied by all his commanders and officers, but they were imprisoned in the Maratha Camp.(46) On hearing of this treachery Mir Abdul Aziz assumed the command of the fortress and prepared for its defence. It was not easy for Raghuji to capture the fort which was stubbornly defended by Abdul Aziz. Raghuji sent his own men along with some followers of Durlabhram to persuade him to surrender, but he did not listen to it, and answered in these terms, "Sir, tell Raghuji that at present I have neither brother, nor master; we are servants of one Lord, who is Aliwardi, the formidable in war. Some ungrateful cowards have gone over to you and listened to your words, but as for us, we shall defend this fortress, as faithful soldiers and as long as breadth shall remain in our bosom and this is our last resolution."(47) So the siege operations continued. The brave commander proved as good as his word and for over a month he sus-

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45. Ibid., p.4
46. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.4.
47. Ibid., p.5.

tained a vigorous siege.(48) At the same time the Maratha raiding parties were sent to occupy the whole of Orissa, as far as Midnapur and Hugli. A major portion of Burdwan was also plundered.(49)

The Nawab was informed by his nephews about Raghuji's invasion in the Orissa. The Nawab, with Mustafa still threatening Bihar, was then not in a position to undertake a campaign in Orissa. He, therefore, deemed it politic to temporise by sending envoys to Raghuji to negotiate for peace. He sent to him a gentleman lately came from Delhi, called Munaanaly Khan, a person of eloquence and abilities. Raghuji ascribing such an unexpected step to conscious weakness, and knowing his strength, answered, "that he could not return home, unless he was complemented with three crore of rupees.(50) The Nawab prolonged the discussions for two months and a half, till at the end of June he heard of the death of Mustafa, when he broke off negotiations. On hearing of Durlabhram's capitivity, the Nawab had sent Sarmast Khan (one of his Pathan) to Raghuji to negotiate for his release. Raghuji despatched Nilopant as his envoy to the Nawab. But this could not settle the matter, when the provisions ran short, Abdul Aziz was forced to surrender the fort on May 12, 1745,(51) to the Marathas after a brave defence for two months, on condition of having his

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48. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.5.
49. Ibid, pp.4 to 5.
50. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.5.
51. Vaidya Dafter, Vol.IV , 1745, Nos. 23, 29 and 31.

person, honour and baggage, as well as that of his people safe, and that none of them should be forced to take part with the Marathas. Then the Marathas moved to third man.(52) "Raghuji advanced towards Birbhum, where he took up his quarters and from there, through small parties of his army sent to the various parts of Orissa, he brought under his power the whole province of Orissa as far as Midnapore and Hedjily together with great part of the Burdwan."(53)

This treaty was insured by a paper sent to him by Raghuji under his hand and seal, and under the hands and seals of all his principal commanders. On these conditions he surrendered the fortress, and having stayed a few days in the Maratha Camp, he took his leave of the Maratha Prince and went to Murshidabad. Raja Durlabhram remained a prisoner for one full year and some months. By the mediation of some bankers who paid a ransom of three Lakh of rupees for him,(54) he was ultimately released. After his release he returned to Murshidabad, where the Nawab repaid the money to his father, a Minister, with whose faithful services he was perfectly satisfied.

Some Afghans, who rebelled against the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, invited Raghuji to Bihar for their release.(55) An indeci-

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52. Ibid., No. 32.
53. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.6.
54. S.P.D.XX, 37 and 46. The Peshwa's help was sought for the release of Raja Durlabhram. Durlabhram also tried for it.
55. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.7.

sive battle was fought between the two armies at Mahib Alipur.(56) From there the Nawab went away to Murshidabad. Raghuji sent out to invade Murshidabad under the advice of Mir Habib. There was a fight between the Nawab and Raghuji, in which the Nawab Aliwardi Khan gave Raghuji a crushing defeat at Ramdighi, near Katwa.(57) Raghuji left the place for Nagpur in disgust in the month of January, 1746. Before his departure Raghuji entered into an agreement with Mir Habib that he should pay eleven lakh of rupees for the use of his army in acquiring the possession of Orissa.(58) A small detachment was allowed to remain under the command of Mir Habib. He plundered and took possession of Orissa, and stationed soldiers at Midnapur, where they were joined by some Afghans dismissed by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan.(59)

Although the Marathas had left Bengal, yet they retained a firm hold on Orissa. Mir Habib dreading an attack by the Nawab of Bengal in the coming cold weather, appealed thus to Raghuji in October: "If your army arrives home at Cuttack soon, so much the better. If not, then write what should I do."(60) He agreed to pay a subsidy of eleven lakh of rupees to Raghuji, and he in return

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56. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II,p.10.
57. Ibid., pp.12 and 14.
58. S.P.D.,XX, 41.
59. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.23.
60. S.P.D., XX, 41.

promised to send his troops for the defence of Orissa, in the month of Kartik (October). But it was very difficult for Raghuji in his financial distress to fit out an expedition.(61) Hence there was delay in Raghuji's reinforcing Mir Habib in Orissa.

The activities of the Marathas on the frontier of Orissa forced the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to take some measures. Sayyad Ahmad Khan was appointed as the Governor of Orissa, and Mir Zafar was made his deputy, who at the head of 7,000 horses and 12,000 foot, marched from Murshidabad in the month of November, 1746. After a few days march in December, he inflicted a crushing defeat on a body of the Marathas at Midnapur on December 12, 1746,(62) which was headed by Mir Habib's lieutenant Sayyid Nur. Sayyid Nur escaped towards Katak and some officers of Mir Habib were killed.(63) The Marathas fled towards Balasore through Jaleswar. Mir Habib encamped at a distance of two miles from Balasore town on the bank of the river Barabalong. There he became busy in raising batteries in order to oppose Mir Jafar. Vessels were also fitted with cannons.(64) Mir Jafar advanced to some distance. He encamped on the northern side of Konhara (Kausin) river. Hence, he received a report that Janoji Bhonsle had already reached Katak with a large army to help Mir Habib and to invade Bengal.(65) At this news, Mir

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61. A news-writer in his camp in Berar reported on December 8,: "Raghuji is enlisting men, but is unable to pay them in cash. He has decided to send a force into Bengal under Janoji with the contingents of some officers, none of whom has actually more than 100 to 500 men under him. They expect to muster 10,000 which is very unlikely." (S.P.D.XX,41 and 44; Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.24).
62. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.24.
63. Bengal Letter to Court, 1747, para 110.
64. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.24.
65. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.II, p.457.

Jafar, thinking that he was about to be outnumbered, enveloped by the Marathas, lost heart, and without making any attempt to hold Midnapur, marched back to Burdwan. But he was hotly pursued by the vanguard of Janoji's army; some of his baggage and elephants were captured.(66) Attaullah Khan and Fakhrulla Khan were sent by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to assist him. They fought an indecisive battle with Janoji, but soon entered into a conspiracy to devide the kingdom of the Nawab by assassinating him. (67) Janoji and Mir Habib invaded Burdwan. The power and influence of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan was now a spent force, and Orissa seemed beyond his reach. Thus, the Nawab was left alone to face the united Afghans and the Marathas. But undaunted, this old man of seventyone personally took command of his army, marched out of his camp, and after fighting a severely contested battle near Burdwan (March 1747) defeated Janoji, and the entire Maratha army had not the heart to face him again in the field. The baffled raiders fled back to Medinipur. Burdwan and Murshidabad districts were temporarily cleared of them, and at the approach of the rainy season, the Nawab returned to his capital.(68) But the Marathas again occupied Orissa as soon as the Nawab Aliwardi Khan turned his steps to Murshidabad. During the whole of this year 1747, the Marathas remained in undisturbed possession of Orissa upto Medinipur.(69) Their stay

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66. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.24.
67. Ibid., p.25.
68. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.28.
69. Ibid.

in and about Balasore, "has in a great measure prevented the currency of trade and occasioned a scarcity of all sorts of grain, the country people flying from their habitation upon every trifling rumour of their entering into this province."(70) Janoji went to Nagpur (71) at the news of the death of his mother. Mir Habib was left behind with a Maratha force at Midnapur.(72) A few days after, one of the younger sons of Raghuji was sent from Nagpur to assist Mir Habib in Orissa.(73) During this period Midnapur remained the headquarter of the Marathas.(74)

The Nawab Aliwardi Khan now returned from Bihar. He sent Haider Ali Khan in advance towards Burdwan to check the advance of the Marathas from the side of Orissa. He began to make preparation for the recovery of Katak or Orissa and tried to block the usual roads of the Marathas from the south, and advanced towards the enemy in Medinipur. At Burdwan Haider Ali did not obey the orders of the Nawab to accompany him to Midnapur as the arrear-pay of his troops had not been cleared off.(75) The Nawab continued his march without waiting for him and reached Balasore on May 8, 1748. He drove away a party of the Marathas who were planning to plunder the English Factory under the command of Nilla Pandit. (76) At this news Mir Habib set fire to his encampment and fled southwards

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70. Calcutta Letter dated February 24, 1748.
71. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.53 to 56.
72. Ibid., pp. 76 to 77.
73. Ibid., p. 77. Siyar refers to Bimbaji,
74. Ibid.
75. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.77.
76. Bengal letters to Court dated August 10, 1749, para 3,No.30.

into the junghes of Katak. Though he made a search in the dense forests for the Marathas, he could not get any trace of them. Then he started for a surprise attack on the fort of Barabati. He entered the city of Katak on May 18, and fifteen days later received the surrender of Barabati. Sayyid Nur, Dharma Das and Sarandaz Khan of the fort, who were ignorant of this fact, made a decision to surrender the fort the next day. So when the three came for an interview with the Nawab for this purpose, the former two were imprisoned and the latter was killed. The garrison in the fort grew furious at these treacherous deeds, and consequently the gates were closed. After a heroic defence for fifteen days, the fort was surrendered to the Nawab Aliwardi Khan on condition that no injury should be inflicted on any of the garrison either in person and or in future.(77) Thus, the reconquest of Orissa was complete. But it was difficult to hold Orissa with the Marathas permanently in occupation of its southern and western flanks.

After settling matters, the Nawab offered the Deputy Governorship of the country first to Mir Jafar and next to Durlabhram.(78) They were unwilling to accept the post because of the fear of the attack by the Marathas who were concealed in the neigh-

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77. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.80. Nana Saheb Peshwa wrote to Malharrao Holkar and Jayaji Shinde from Bengal on July 13, 1748, that Raghuji was defeated in the battle of Katak. He could not do anything, so he retreated back. This shows that Raghuji himself had led his army to Katak instead of Mir Habib. (Kavya Itihas Sangraha, no.64).

78. Bengal Public Consultations dated May 29, 1749, (J.Long ed.); Selections from unpublished Records No.45, p.10, Bengal Public Consultations 1749, p.10; Bengal and Madras papers, Vol.II, 1688-1757, part I, p.68.

bouring jungles. So a beggar named Sheikh Abdus was ultimately appointed the Governor. The Nawab quickly left Katak and hastened towards Bengal in order to avoid the coming rainy season.(79) Only six or seven days after the departure of the Nawab, Mir Habib appeared at the head of a number of Marathas at Katak, defeated and captured the seven days Naib-Nazim,(80) and so the Marathas recovered the capital of Orissa. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan received this news at Balasore on July 16, 1749. But fatigue of his army and rainy season, compelled him to postpone the recovery of Katak, and he continued his homeward march.

After the subjugation of Katak, an advanced Maratha force under the command of Mir Habib and Mohan Singh marched towards the north, and encamped at Balasore on October 17, 1749. After ravaging Orissa, they began to raid Bengal towards the end of February 1750. Murshidabad along with neighbouring places was also subjected to occasional raids.(81)

Section -VI
Peace Treaty with the Marathas

On recovering from his illness, the Nawab marched from Murshidabad to Katwa. After assembling his army there he advanced

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79. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.83.
80. Ibid., pp.85 to 86.
81. Ibid., p.86.

via Burdwan to Medinipur (December 1749) to drive out the Marathas. While the internal trouble was raging in the Medinipur cantonment, towards the end of February, 1750, a body of several thousand Marathas slipped past him and plundered the country as far as Rajmahal, whence they turned towards Murshidabad. The Nawab quickly fell back from Medinipur to Burdwan. But on hearing of his march, the raiders turned aside and took refuge in the jungles of West Bengal. At the might of Siraj-ud-daullah's force, the Marathas fled.(82) He pursued them for some distance and then encamped at the post of Balasore. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan ordered retreat. He halted at Burdwan, then returned to Medinipur, and left the troops at Midnapur to the charge of Durlabhram and Mir Jafar. After instructing them to drive out the Marathas from Balasore, the Nawab marched to Patna. Here he fell ill.(83) Durlabhram and Mir Jafar grew nervous at the news of the illness of the Nawab and could do nothing to check the Maratha raids. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan proceeded in December 1750 to Midnapur. He chased the Marathas on and on till they returned to Orissa. Due to fatigue, he returned to Murshidabad. But certain circumstances, however, forced the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to make treaty with the Marathas.

1. Surrounded by treachery all round and continuous intrigue, the heart-broken and exhausted Nawab Aliwardi Khan at the age of Seventy three, was unable to cope with the Marathas.

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82. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II.p.86.

83. Ibid., p.109.

All that he now wanted was peace, and nothing else. He was suffering from physical ailment, and from infirmity. The fall of Hazi Ahmad,(84) and Zainuddin Muhammad, the revolt of the Chief Afghan pillars of the State, and his inability to pay the soldiers in the protracted war with the Marathas, broke down his spirit. He wanted rest, and his own people, who were much troubled, desired peace.(85)

2. On the other hand, the Marathas were defeated several times at the hands of the Nawab. Mir Habib and the Marathas realised that it was useless to continue such a harassing war, which brought them no ultimate gain. Raghuji was more involved in debt, then ever before; as a financial speculation his invasion of the eastern provinces had failed. His income from the conquest of a poor province like Orissa had not covered his expenses. When in 1749, his son Sabaji beat a hurried retreat from that province to Nagpur, his soldiers pressed Raghuji hard for their heavy arrears of salary and he had not the means of satisfying them, or any other creditor. A friendly arrangement with the Nawab would give the Maratha an assured income without the expenses of collecting it fitfully and by force. Due to all these causes both the parties were now eager for peace. So the Nawab permitted Mir Jafar to act as an intermediary, and to open peace negotiations with the Marathas in 1751. Mir Jafar sent two of his men to Mir Habib, who welcomed the proposal.He

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84. Riyaz, op.cit., p.361.

85. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.111.

despatched his own agent Mirza Saheb with the Bengal envoys to Mir Zafar, who introduced him to the Nawab, then at Katwa. The terms were settled at Murshidabad. The draft treaty was referred to the court of Nagpur, and finally in May or June, 1751, a treaty (86) was agreed upon and signed by both the parties.(87) After making the treaty with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, Raghuji came back to Nagpur and disbanded whole of the army excepting 2,000 horsemen. Shivbhat Sathe who was appointed the Subedar of Orissa, came to Nagpur with hundies of six lakh of rupees, realised from

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86. N.H.M., Vol.II, p.224; Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol.III, Introduction, p.IX; Parasnis, Itihas Sangraha, Vol. VII, Nos. 4-6; also cited in Chitnis Shahi Charitra, pp.134-135; Pratinidhi Gharanyacha Itihas, vol.IV, pp.213-214; Sarkar, J.N.,op.cit., Vol.I, p.166.
B.C.Ray expresses doubt regarding the exactness of the terms of treaty. But from the treaty of Devgaon 1803, it is certain that Katak and Balasore were surrendered to the British by the Bhonsles. This means that Katak and Balasore were with the Bhonsles upto 1803, since their conquest (Ray,B.C.,op.cit. p.20).

87. The terms of the treaty as described by Ghulam Hussain Tabatai as follows:-

(a) Mir Habib would now become a servant of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan and would act as Naib-Nazim (Deputy Governor) of Orissa on his behalf. He would pay the surplus revenue of the province to Raghuji's army as their salary and Mir Habib agreed to pay four lakh of rupees to the latter in this respect. (Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II,pp.112 to 113; Bengal Select Committee Programmes, Feb.10,1768). In fact the Nawab seeing no other relief ceded the whole of the province of Katak, as far as Balasore, which was granted in the name of Mir Habib, as the nominal deputy of the Nawab of Bengal, but as the real servant of Raghuji.(Duff, Grant op.cit., Vol.I, p.457).

(b) Twelve lakh of rupees should annually be paid to Raghuji in lieu of further claims. This was the amount which was settled for the Chauth of Bengal and Bihar "on condition that the Marathas would not set their foot within the dominions of Aliwardi." (Duff, Grant, op.cit.,Vol.I,p.457;

the persons of that province.(88)

Raghuji Bhonsle had thus succeeded in winning for himself a kingdom extending from Berar in the west to Orissa in the east and from Garha-Mandla in the north to Chandrapura in the south. In Berar he shared the revenue with the Nizam, but in other regions his rule was supreme.(89)

There were many loop-holes and defects in this treaty. It was agreed that an annual '<u>chauth</u>' of twelve lakhs would be paid to the Bhonsles for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and that the Nawab

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C.P.C., op.cit., Vol.III, Introduction, p.IX). It has been further explained that the sum of twelve lakhs should be remitted in two instalments in every six months to Banaras either through Jagat Seth or Raja Swaroop Chand as Raghuji would think proper. (C.P.C. op.cit., Vol.III, No. 1247).

(c) The river "Suvarnalekha" which runs near Balasore was the form of demarcating line between the boundaries of Orissa and Bengal. The Marathas will not set their foot on the other side of that river. (Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.112 to 113; C.P.C., op.cit., Vol.III, Introduction, p.IX). Thus the district of Medinipur was once more joined to Bengal. (Siyar, op.cit.,Vol.II, p.113; Yusuf, op.cit., p.180).

(d) The Nawab will pay the <u>Chauth</u> in respect of the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa regularly to the Bhonsle.

(e) Twenty five lakh of rupees will be paid immediately by the Nawab to the Bhonsle, as a tribute.

Also see Appendix- XII.

88. Vaidya Daftar, Vol. V, No.3 of 1752.

89. Majumdar, R.C., op.cit., p.243.

Aliwardi Khan would, though formally appoint the nominee of the Bhonsle as the Naib-Nazim of Orissa. These terms did not conclusively prove that Orissa was ceded to the Marathas. At a later stage, this loophole was taken advantage of by the English.(90).

This treaty was a triangular compromise amongst three sets of forces. Raghuji for money, Mir Habib for honour and revenge, and the Nawab Aliwardi Khan for rest, retaining only his nominal over lordship over the Orissa.

This treaty was anamolous, and not clear in its contents. If twelve lakh of rupees were to be paid by the Nawab, as Chauth for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and, moreover, Mir Habib was appointed as Governor of Orissa, it is not clear what was the necessity of the demarcating line between Bengal and Orissa over which he desired to retain authority. The last clause reveals the weak stand of the Nawab, which afterwards gave scope for the Maratha occupation of Orissa.

The treaty authorised Mir Habib to pay the surplus revenue of Orissa to Raghuli for the arrears of his troops. But it is silent as to what should happen to the surplus revenue, after the full payment of the arrears of Raghuji's troops.(91)

A year after the conclusion of the peace, Janoji arrived at Katak as his father's representative and took charge of the Maratha army. But he refused to take orders from Mir Habib, as he

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90. Mehtab, H.K., op.cit., p.112.

91. Ray, B.C., op.cit., p.20.

was now the Nawab's officer, and not Raghuji's. The Maratha officers pressed Janoji to call upon Mir Habib to submit an account of the income and expenditure of the province, and of the division of the Chauth of Bengal between the Maratha and the Afghan soldiers. He agreed as he could not brook a rival to his authority in the person of Nawab's agent. So, a plot was hatched to get rid of Habib.(92) Janoji charged him with embezzlement and made him prisoner in his camp at Garhpada, a big and important village on the borders of Mohanbhanj, fifteen miles, north of Balasore. Habib was indignant at being confined, and with a few followers tried to escape, but the guards placed over him hacked him to pieces.(93) His end was a tragic one.(94) The place, where

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92. By nature Janoji was haughty and unanswerable to any superior authority. To this was added the malice of the subordinate officers of Mir Habib towards the latter. Besides everything else, there was the intriguing Nawab Aliwardi Khan who wanted to wreck his vengeance on Mir Habib. The Nawab caused a forged letter to fall into the hands of Janoji, who relying on its contents, ordered Mir Habib's execution. Mir Habib and Mirza Saheb acknowledged the nominal sovereignty of the Nawab of Bengal. They did not act as designed by the Raja of Nagpur. So the former was killed by Janoji and the latter was replaced by Sheo Bhatt Sathe. (Siyar,op.cit., Vol.II, p.29).

93. According to a Maratha account Aliwardi brought about the death of Mir Habib by a stratagem. He forged a letter using the name of Mir Habib and contrived to have it put in Janoji's hands, who ordered the execution of Mir Habib immediately. (Sardesai,G.S.; Maratha Riyasat, Madhya Vibhag, Vol.II, p.313). Karam Ali also supports this view. According to him the envoys of the Marathas came for making peace, but owing to the inordinate demands of Mir Habib, it was not affected. The Nawab sent Rs.50,000 to Habibullah by the hand of Fakhruttajar saying "This amount was found in your house." Habibullah though he knew that the sending of this money was a trick, out of his greed took the money secretly without informing the Maratha Sardars. When the Maratha envoys asked for the amount settled for them, the Nawab showed them the receipt of Habibullah and said that further sums would be sent. The Marathas, on learning of this payment, deemed Habibullah Khan a peculator, and being also disgusted with his harshness of tongue slew him in the course of a discussion.(Aliwardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal-English translation by Sarkar, J.N., p.21).

94. Appendix- XIII

his camp was pitched, is still known as Habibganj. Such was the fate of Mir Habib, who after a strenuous struggle for nine years had freed Orissa from the Mughals in the interest of the Marathas.

In 1755, the whole province was finally and conclusively made over to the Marathas at the request of the zamindars of Midnapur and Burdwan in exchange for four lakhs of the "Chauth". The remainder to be paid from Bengal. Janoji's attention was engrossed by more exciting events in his own country, and he contended himself with getting as much money as he could out of the province, and leaving it to be governed by his officers as they chose. The northern limit of Orissa was at this time not (as is generally stated) at the Subarnarekha but included Pataspur and Bhogran.(95)

Mir Habib was succeeded by Musalih-ud-din Muhammad Khan, a courtier of Raghuji, as Naib-Nazim of Orissa. Though legally a representative of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, he acted in all matters as a servant of the Maratha Rajah, and had no real control over the administration such as Habib had exercised.(96) Thus, in a few years, Orissa passed entirely out of the hands of the Subahdar of Bengal and Bihar, and became a Maratha province. This was the one permanent result of the Maratha invasions.

It is a mistake to say that the Nawab ceded Orissa to the Marathas. Its revenue only was assigned to the Marathas, so it became one vast jagir for them without any change in its territorial

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95. Hunter and Stirling etc.- A history of Orissa, pp.303 to 304.
96. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.190.

sovereignty. This was so only in theory, but in practice due to the weakness of the Nawab's administration, the Marathas turned their fiscal right over Orissa into full political sovereignty and to annex it to their kingdom of Berar. The Nawab's new deputy was selected from among the officers of the Court of Nagpur. He, by his previous association and weakness of position, yielded to the Marathas in all matters so that the latter had their way in everything even under the nominal sovereignty of the Nawab over the province.(97)

Beside the above mentioned cause, there were many others also, which created friction between the Nawab and the Marathas. The Marathas could never forget that the entire Subah of Orissa as defined in the geography of the Mughal Empire had not been ceded to them, but its northern most district Medinipur was retained by the Nawab, and that district was a very convenient halfway home for raids into Bengal and Bihar. Therefore, they wanted to seize Medinipur as their legitimate due. This brought them into conflict with the English, who had now become guardians of the Nawab's territory.

There was disagreement about the Chauth of Bengal. Twelve lakh of rupees a year were paid annually to the Marathas by the Nawab's government upto 1758. The English having now taken charge of the defence of Bengal, withheld the Chauth and opened negotiations with the Court of Nagpur with the purpose of obtaining a

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97. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, pp.94 to 95.

antee that if the money was paid, no part of the Nawab's dominion would be troubled by a Maratha force. As that court could give no really affective assurance, the Chauth was not paid for some years. This led to angry diplomatic protests and threats of invasion on the part of the Marathas.(98)

The Nawab had made the treaty of 1751 with the Marathas in the hope of giving peace and security to his subjects, but it did not put an end to their misery. Interference from the Peshwa's side in the Maratha claims on Bengal aggravated Raghuji's difficulties towards the end of his life. On January 21, 1754, he wrote to Sadashiv Rao Bhau, "Raghunath Rao has sent his envoy from Hastinapur to Bengal with a letter for the Nawab Aliwardi Khan asking him to send him the Chauth of Bengal for the last three years. Therefore, he is creating trouble in my territory. He, himself had settled the matter regarding Bengal and yet his Vakil has gone there to disturb my administration. Please forbid him from doing so and also remind the Nawab Aliwardi Khan to act on the terms of the treaty signed. (99) Raghuji died on February 14, 1755, and his eldest son Janoji succeeded him. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan also died in 1756. His grandson Sirajuddaullah succeeded to the Masnad of Bengal.

The treaty made by the Nawab with the Marathas and his payment of Chauth for Bengal, though it did not bring perfect or immediate peace to Bengal and Bihar, achieved one happy result. It

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98. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, pp.95-96.

99. S.P.D.XX.77.

changed the chafacter of the Maratha raids.(100) After the treaty was signed, Janoji returned to Nagpur, withdrawing all his troops and appointing Shivbhat Sathe(101) in 1756 as his agent to manage the affairs of Orissa. Sathe, thereafter, executed his task satisfactorily and maintained an efficient government in the province for a long time.(102) The possession of Katak was ensured.(103) A series of expeditions to Bengal terminated after a contest of ten years, in the acquisition to the Marathas of Katak, and the promises of twelve lakhs annually from the Nawab Aliwardi Khan as the Chauth of Bengal.(104) This was the greatest achievement crowning Raghuji's earlier successes.(105)

Within a year only, the battle of Plassey was fought where the independence of India was sold to the English by the traitor Mir Zafar. With Sirajuddaullah fell the last independent Nawab of Bengal and the East India Company of England became the

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100. Sarkar, J.N., op.cit., Vol.I, p.99.

101. Shivbhat Sathe's appointment to Katak is mentioned in this letter by RaghujiJachak, a Sardar of Raghuji for the information of Vishwanath Bhatt. Rakhmaji was one of the officers of Orissa, when Shivbhat assumed charge of Subehdari of that district. (Vaidya Daftar, Vol. V, No. 3 of 1755).

102. Shivbhat Sathe was the Subedar of Orissa in the time of Raghuji. He was very efficient, but his army was small. His work was to collect Chauthai from the Zamindars of Orissa and the Nawab of Bengal. He stayed at Katak. When Raghuji had gone back, he went to Murshidabad to realise Chauthai. He himself writes. "By the order of late Raghuji, I am fulfilling my duties." (Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal., Varshik Patriken, Vol. V, p.62) Shivbhat Sathe writes from Nagpur to Vishwanath Bhat, the account of his doings and the Maratha activities in Bengal preceding the battle of Plassey and after the death of Raghuji. He says that Vishwanath Bhat was his prudent relative. He went to Katak with his advice. He exerted himself to the utmost there, and also at Murshidabad to maintain the Maratha prestige. When princes of the States heard the news of Raghuji's death, they

virtual master of the land. With the appointment of Shivram Bhatt as the Naib Nazim of Orissa, the last vestige of Mughal authority, Mir Zafar had become the shadowy Nawab of Bengal under the protection of Robert Clive, the victor in the field of Plassey. The real political authority remained in the hands of Clive and his successors who came as the governors of the East India Company. Since the Nawab had been a mere puppet in the hands of the English the Marathas began to carry on their political negotiations with them instead of with the Nawab of Bengal. But the English were clever enough to exercise influence unnoticed, keeping the unfortunate Nawab in the fore-front in all their political manoeuvres. Therefore, it was inevitable that the Marathas and the English would come into conflict in their struggle for supremacy in India.(106)

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became all rowdy. The landlords of Abagad and two more forts were taken to task and the forts were captured by the soldiers kept there for protection. Fateh Khan was at Barabati fort, and was found to be at arms. Shivbhat after fighting with him for twenty seven days captured the fort. He then went to Murshidabad. None of the Bhonslas were with him. He formed friendship with the Nawab, and recovered the Chauthai of two years as settled with him. Mirjasala the Dewan of the Nawab was not on good terms with him. (Vaidya Daftar, Vol. V, No.57 of 1756).

103. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.224.

104. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.48.

105. Appendix, XIV.

106. Ray, B.C., op.cit., pp.161-162.

CHAPTER VI

RAGHUJI'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

SECTION I

His Relations with Raja Shahu, Ram Raja, the Peshwa and Tarabai.

(a) Raghuji and Raja Shahu

Since 1743, Shahu's health had been visibly declining. In that year his life was despaired of for some days, and the Peshwa was summoned to Satara from his important occupation in the north. What agitated his mind most was the fact that he had no male issue to succeed him, and the question of his succession came to distract the poor King's few remaining days. Gradually Shahu became so weak and helpless that he would not allow the Peshwa to move away from his side for fear of some unforeseen danger overtaking him all of a sudden. His own ill health, the intrigues of his two queens, Tarabai's independent move to secure power, the selfish motives of some of the powerful chiefs such as Raghuji, Murar Rao Ghorpade, the Angaria brothers, and some other subjects, were some of the problems, the Peshwa was called upon to handle, and he did all that was possible to safeguard the public interests under the circumstances, with the counsel and cooperation of some of his own supporters, such as Sindhia, Holkar, Purandares and Chitnis. Thus his last days having been saddened through worries, intrigues, quarrels and the selfish bickerings of his courtiers, Shahu ultimately succumbed to them.

The financial arrangements made by Shahu at the commencement of his reign had failed, and he was headover ears in debt(1) to private bankers, who were pressing for the re-payment of their loans. He was hardly able to pay the expenses of his court, and the enormous sums required by his wives.(2) On October 21, 1746, the Peshwa wrote to Ramchandra Baba, "I have been unavoidably detained at court. The debts contracted by the Maharaja, the enormous sums required by the queens, and their constant quarrels have so engrossed the Maharaja's attention that he has no time to consider the matters of state which I put before him. I have a great desire to journey to the north, but that does not seem possible. I am now given leave to proceed to Poona, as I have the Konkan affairs of urgency on hand."(3)

So in this helpless state, Shahu relied more and more on Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, for he thought that only Peshwa could extricate him out of his difficulties. This attitude of the King doubled the jealousy of the court circle and his opponents re-doubled their efforts to discredit the Peshwa in the eyes of his master. The Peshwa's opponents poured into the King's ears all sorts of bitter complaints and much against his will (4) yielded only once to the pressure of the opposition, and made a trial of how matters would

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1. The details of Shahu's debts are to be found in Purandare Daftar, Vol. I, Nos. 214 to 218.
2. S.P.D.XVIII, 85.
3. Ibid., 86.
4. Shahu had made secret enquiries ever about the personal conduct of the Peshwa and had satisfied himself about his good conduct and loyalty. (Aitihasik Patravayavahar No. 61).

fare by depriving the Peshwa of his office in the early months of 1747 for a short time. The Peshwa willingly accepted it, resigned office, and for a time kept aloof.from the affairs of state, watching the course of events from outside.

The news of the Peshwa's dismissal spread like wild fire throughout the length and breadth of the country.(5) Officers and bankers were upset to see the administration breaking down. There were visible signs of chaos, all trust and confidence disappeared in a moment. To the world outside it was the voice of the Peshwa that was dominant. He also sent a wisely and timely warning to the King. In one of the letters the Peshwa writes - "The news of my having been dismissed from office has spread widely, it will encourage the Nizam and other enemies. Speedy measures are required to counteract the evil consequences."(6)

Shahu then called Raghuji from Nagpur to take charge of the affairs of the state. Raghuji wisely declined the offer, and reached Satara with his son, Mudhoji, only in May, 1747, when the Peshwa had been restored to his office.(7) He did not consider this offer as worthwhile, because his own independent field of Nagpur supplied him with a more lucrative arena for his talents than

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5. Aitihasik Patravayavahar, No. 65; Bharatvarsh, Year I, No.45. This is dated January 1747.

6. This note clearly explains the trouble raging between the King and the Peshwa (Aitihasik Patravayavahar, Nos. 59 and 65).

7. Raghuji was not much interested in the Satara affairs, and he made a secret understanding with the Peshwa (Bakhar, pp.63-64).

Satara, where he had nothing to gain and possibly everything to lose. He also did not aspire to secure the succession of the Maratha state for his son Mudhoji.(8) Having clearly grasped the position of affairs at that critical juncture and being convinced that the Peshwa alone was capable of handling the critical situations. Raghuji gave the latter his wholehearted support, in spite of the pressure brought to bear upon him from influential quarters. He was repeatedly urged by the King to visit him on his death bed, but he managed to postpone his arrival at Satara till after his master's death, and until the succession of Ram Raja had been finally settled.

There was a definite purpose for which Shahu called Raghuji to his presence; it was that Shahu believed that Raghuji had amassed vast wealth from Bengal, and he demanded a share in it to pay off his debts, which he wished to clear before he died. Raghuji in his personal visit to Satara in 1747 had possibly agreed to pay off Shahu's debts.(9) Shahu did his best to ask for funds from Raghuji to pay off his debt. But Raghuji clearly evaded the payment even after repeated despatch of special messengers and agents for that purpose.(10) Vishwanath Bhat was sent by Shahu to Nagpur for bringing Raghuji to Satara. For this trip he was paid rupees two thousand for travel expenses etc.(11) Vishwanath Bhat was trying

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8. The Vaidya papers mention Mudhoji's presence at Satara.
9. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV; No. 39.
10. Ibid., No. 44; S.P.D. XVIII, 88.
11. Ibid., Nos. 27 and 28.

his best to improve Raghuji's relations with Shahu.(12) The Peshwa who was worried about the payment of Shahu's debt, also enquired as to when Raghuji and Vishwanath Bhat were starting for Satara(13)

Raghuji's financial position was not sound and stable. He was harassed by his creditors, and only Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya got his account settled. That is why he was unable to pay off the debt of Shahu, and avoided going to Satara during his life time.(14) He tried to fill his empty treasury by demanding three lakh rupees for Jankiram's son's release, and a ransom of seven and a half lakh of rupees for the release of Chanda Saheb. Raghuji was upset by Shahu's urgent demand for money. He told Vishwanath Bhat to give reasonable excuses to the King for not sending money, which the latter failed to do.(15) In fact, the full revenue of Raghuji's principalities could not be realised. As Naro Anant Gadre wrote to Vaidya brothers, "there were difficulties in realising the revenue of Kelwood, Bhugaon, Tekdai, Peth, Nagpur and Ramtek."(16) Even Raghuji could not realise the money by himself.(17)

Shahu was, however, in sore need of money, so he lamented the delay in Raghuji's coming to Satara.(18) He also wished to consult Raghuji about the future arrangement of the Maratha Raj, but

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12. Ibid. No. 9.
13. Ibid, No. 38. This letter shows that the Peshwa was in favour of Raghuji's coming to Satara.
14. S.P.D.XX, 46.
15. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.21.
16. Ibid., No. 22.
17. Ibid., Nos. 18 and 19.
18. Ibid., No.43; S.P.D. XX, 54.

Raghuji declined the visit to Shahu at Satara, on one excuse or another at this time, professing all the while, however, that he was coming. So he left Nagpur, but loitered during the course of the journey, not hastening to go to Satara. He was reluctant to go to Shahu's presence as required, and abandoned the idea of going to Satara personally,(19) although he had planned to visit Satara. As a shrewd politician, the Peshwa had very early guessed the attitude of Raghuji, i.e. that he was not likely to proceed to Satara and meet the King, as he would have to pay the King's debts.(20)

Possibly there was the rumour that Shahu was unconscious or unable to execute work, so Raghuji sent Vishwanath Bhat urgently to obtain correct news of Shahu's health, and required an autographed letter from Shahu, upon receipt of which he was to decide definitely his own plans of going to Satara.(21) But this rumour was unfounded, as Shahu was active even two weeks before his death, and he was transacting all the state business. He was active even at this time in collecting money to pay off what he owed to others.(22) From time to time Raghuji tried to pay off the debt which he owed to Shahu, and bear the expenses of Anushthan etc. performed at Achre for Shahu and his Queen.(23) He was also asked to remit two

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19. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, Nos. 16, 18, 19, 21, 46, 47 and 52; S.P.D.XX, 51.
20. S.P.D. XX, 26.
21. Ibid., 54 Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, Nos. 45, 46 and 47.
22. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV - Nos. 42 and 51.
23. Ibid, Nos. 29, 30, 31 and 42.

lakh rupees as agreed upon at Khande Rajpuri.(24) Although Shahu wrote letters and sent his messengers and agents to Raghuji, for the question of adopting a child for him and for the arrangement of the Maratha Raj in future.(25) Yet the real purpose of Shahu calling Raghuji to his presence at Satara, was not so much for settling the succession as to have his debts cleared off.(26)

From the very beginning Raghuji had not been paying the annual tributes which had accumulated, and were in arrears. Raghuji was frequently written to, but without effect. He was now warned that if the amounts for the current and the preceding years were not paid, the Raja would take severe steps and then it would go hard with him. He was often requested to come to the Huzur but without effect. He was informed that the servant ought to obey his master and he should report to the Huzur without a moment's delay as the King had wanted to entrust some important missions to him. Thus, Shahu's mind spoke on the aggressive attitude of Raghuji, but he paid no heed to Shahu's warning.(27)

As Raghuji did not visit Shahu at Satara and had declined his offer of shouldering the responsibility of the fast expanding Maratha kingdom after the dismissal of the Peshwa from his post, the situation of the state became very critical. It effected the fortunes of the state and caused an unprecedented confusion in the

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24. Vad. G.C., Selections from the Satara Raja and Peshwa's diaries No.166.
25. Kavya Itihas Sangraha- Thorle Shahu Maharajayanchen Charitra, p. 100.
26. Vaidya Daftar; Vol.IV, No.39.
27. Vad, G.C., op.cit., Nos. 164 and 165.

affairs of the state. But within a couple of months all people and the public felt convinced that the Peshwa was the only loyal and honest servant of the state and he alone possessed the resources to control the intricate affairs of the fast expanding Maratha state. Shahu made a trial whether anybody else could take the Peshwa's place, but none came forward to shoulder the responsibility of Peshwa's office. Shahu also ardently desired that he should pay off his debts before his death; otherwise he would be doomed to eternal perdition. Shahu, consequently, restored the Peshwa to his office in April 1747, personally visited his tent, and effecting a complete reconciliation with him and gave him his full confidence.(28)

The two things which greatly preyed upon Shahu's mind at this time were the questions of finding a suitable successor, and the payment of his debts before his death. He had no son to succeed him. He had, therefore, decided to take in adoption a suitable boy either from a collateral branch of the Bhonsle family or to take a Rajput boy from the North. According to Jaipur papers, Shahu then made another effort to adopt a Rajput boy, Kushal Singh, through the help of Sawai Jai Singh.(29) Shahu also thought of adopting Mudhoji, the son of Raghuji.

(b) Question of Mudhoji's adoption by Raja Shahu

Balaji Bajirao had on his appointment as Peshwa pledged

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28. Chitnis- Thorle Shahu Maharajayanchen Charitra, Kavya Itihas Sangraha Patren Yadi, No. 48; S.P.D.XXXI,137. Aitihasik Patren No.75, Aitihasik Patravyavahar,No. 61.

29. Brij Kishore- Tarabai and Her Times, p. 168.

himself to support the claims of Sambhaji of Kolhapur. In 1740, Sambhaji came to Satara, there he and the Peshwa made a secret treaty. There the Peshwa openly disclosed to Sambhaji that apparently he was the servant of Shahu, but in reality he would like to serve Sambhaji. After Shahu's death, Sambhaji would become the master of the kingdom and the Peshwa would be his servant.(30) This policy which would have united under one crown the two Bhonsle kingdoms would certainly have been best for the Maratha people and would have removed one cause of constant friction in Maratha politics. But in spite of their apparent reconciliation, Shahu hated Sambhaji, and never forgave him for his alliance with the Nizam, or Udaji Chavan's attempt to assasinate him. Sambhaji too had no children. It was, therefore, better to settle in Shahu's life time the question of adoption once for all.

Sagunabai's first cousin was married to Raghuji and she had pressed on Shahu the adoption by herself of Mudhoji, son of Raghuji.(31) So long as Sagunabai was alive, Sakwarbai stoutly opposed the suggestion, for if acted on, it would have made Sagunabai a more important person than herself. Thus,the queens of Shahu, and his aunt Tarabai, who was a prisoner in the fort of Satara, started intrigues about the succession and the future arrangement of the state, when they felt that Shahu was going to pass away. He

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30. Rajwade, V.K., Lekhsangraha, part I, Aitihasik Prastavana, p.40.

31. Vaidya Daftar- Vol. IV, No. 24.

had about more than a dozen or two competent and experienced advisers, sardars and generals whom he freely and repeatedly consulted and with whom he discussed as to who should succeed him. Govind Rao Chitnis was in favour of the adoption of Mudhoji because he was related to the younger queen of Shahu, and their relationship was very close and friendly. The public was also in favour of this adoption. It was also rumoured that the King was also in favour of this adoption. Elephants were sent to bring Raghuji and Mudhoji in a procession to Satara.(32) Mudhoji was brought to Satara for inspection. Upon Saguna bai's death, Sakwarbai declared herself ready to adopt Mudhoji, and his adoption in the end was proposed by all the conflicting parties, and even the Peshwa saw that it was impossible to win Shahu to the succession of Sambhaji. At Govind Rao Chitnis's urgent request, the King formally agreed to adopt Raghuji's son. At this point a wholly unexpected event brought the transient armistice to an end.

Hearing all these rumours Tarabai asked the king whether he was adopting the young one? He replied that there was no successor in the family. Hence that young boy who was related to him had been selected as his successor, so there was some talk about him being adopted. When Tarabai got this reply from Shahu, she became very furious and shouted, "you have Bhawani's blessing and that would never go wrong. You will not remain issueless, hence there is no need of adopting anyone else.(33) She disclosed

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32. Ibid., Nos. 14, 19 and 26.

33. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.16.

the identity of his grandson Ram Raja, brought up secretly in exile by his grand mother, Tarabai. He was born of her imbecile son Shivaji II who had died in 1726. She alleged that she had concealed this Ram Raja since his childhood, for fear of his life, in an out of the way village, far away from home and impressed upon Shahu the wisdom of selecting this nearest heir for his successor, as he was born in a direct line from the great Shivaji. In the unsafe circumstances of plots and complications then prevailing at Satara, it was not thought advisable to bring Ram Raja there at once from his concealed refuge. Shahu did not legally adopt him or bring him to Satara in his life time for fear that he would come to harm at the hands of Sakwarbai. Shahu thought that Ram Raja, being nearer to him in relationship, would in the eyes of the general public of Maharashtra be a better claimant to the throne than any other boy. Shahu after due consideration wrote two small notes, now termed his wills in his own hand, providing for Ram Raja being raised to the throne after his death, and enjoining the Peshwa to conduct the affairs of the state as before.(34)

Sakwarbai, however, failed to be convinced and continued vehemently to denounce the whole thing as a mere hoax and a cunning device of Tarabai to recapture power in the name of Ram Raja, who being nearer to him in relationship, was the rightful claimant to the throne. She wrote to Sambhaji of Kolhapur, begging him to take instant steps to save the kingdom, by adopting Mudhoji and by claiming on Shahu's death the whole kingdom of Mahârashtra for himself

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34. The two Wills prove that the Peshwa played no trick in the executions of the Wills as used to be alleged.

and his adopted son. Shahu quickly reasoned with Sakwarbai that her plan (to adopt another child to frustrate the plan of Tarabai) would simply land her in trouble as there would in all probability, be a war of succession between the boy adopted by her and Tarabai's grandson, Ram Raja. But on his death bed he signed a will naming Ram Raja as his successor, under the regency of the Peshwa.

Mudhoji felt very unhappy when he got the news of Shahu's dropping the idea of his adoption due to the opposition of Tarabai. Holkar advised Raghuji that under such circumstances he should act according to his dignity and office. According to his advice, Raghuji took leave of Shahu and departed for Nagpur with Mudhoji.(35) Even before starting for Nagpur, Vishwanath Bhat knew before hand that Ram Raja was to be the new king.(36)

Shahu died on December 15, 1749. A critical situation developed at Satara after the death of Shahu owing to the intrigues of the Peshwa on the one hand and of Tarabai on the other. The struggle for succession between the various parties developed. The situation became unstable. There was a rumour prevalent there that the Peshwa had taken away ~~the son of~~ Sambhaji and the continued stay of Raghuji at Satara. (37) A fortnight after the death of Shahu, according to his wishes, Ram Raja was ushered into Satara and was placed on the throne.(38)

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35. Vaidya Daftar- Vol.IV, No.16.
36. Ibid., Nos. 34 and 37.
37. S.P.D. XXVI, 69.
38. Kinchad and Parasnis, op.cit., p.291.

(c) Ram Raja becomes the Chhatrapati

Unfortunately, Ram Raja, who became Chhatrapati in pursuance of Shahu's last wishes, proved incapable. He could not give any decision of matters placed before him for consideration(39), because he was an utter stranger to the Maratha nation. From the beginning Tarabai severely controlled all his actions, stopped him from associating with the Peshwa with a view to maintain her own impression in the administration and destroy the Peshwa's increasing influence. For a time she conducted this game, secretly trying to gather power in her own hands, and allowing no chance to Ram Raja either to obtain experience or wield authority independently. Ram Raja was, however, inclined to support the Peshwa against his grandmother, but this conduct enraged her all the more, so that they soon became bitter opponents of each other. Later on she openly declared him to be an imposter and not her grandson at all. She had played this game in order to secure power into her own hands, which the Peshwa was too shrewd to allow.

The patience of the Peshwa was already exhausted. He had been staying at Satara for over seven months and had tried his level best to put Ram Raja in a proper trim to discharge the functions of his office with courage and wisdom. But, he had failed partly on account of the intrigues of Tarabai and partly on account of the vacillating character of Ram Raja himself.

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39. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV- No.21.

He, therefore, thought of leaving Satara. But before doing so, he made one more attempt to ease the situation and sent an urgent call to Raghuji to report at once to Satara. Raghuji complied with the order and started for Poona. (40) He also wished to come to Satara with his escort to pay his respects to the Chhatrapati.(41) Trimbakji Bhonsle and Burhanji Mohite along with Raghuji marched towards Satara with their armies. The Peshwa's power grew stronger and stronger. The growing power of the Peshwa created doubts in the mind of Govind Rao Chitnis, so with the intention of having close contacts with powerful sardars, he also invited Raghuji. But he could not come at once as was expected, so he sent his younger brother Baburao Chitnis to bring him, and wrote several letters to Rakhmaji Ganesh Chitnis to come with Sena Sahib Subah as early as possible. Thereupon, Raghuji came along with him. The Peshwa tried to make Govind Rao realise that Pratinidhi and Tarabai along with Damaji Gaikwad belonged to one party. So Raghuji should be persuaded to join the Rajmandal, then the party of Tarabai would not be able to do anything against them, otherwise Raghuji being the relation of Tarabai might go to her side, then the situation would become more difficult. But Raghuji and his party were all eager to secure the Peshwa's favour. (42)

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40. S.P.D. XX, 61, 62, 64 and 70.

41. Ibid., 65.

42. S.P.D. VI, 15 and 18; S.P.D. XXVI, 55.

(d) Tarabai tries to win over Raghuji

Tarabai's intrigues were a constant menace to Peshwa's safety. She soon realised that the Peshwa meant merely to use her name and to retain in his own hand the full power of the state. Therefore, she also began to recruit a party to oppose the Peshwa in the interest of the new king. She made an attempt to win over Malharrao Holkar to her side through Babuji Naik immediately after Shahu's death. (43) Though disaffected towards the Peshwa for the time being, Babuji Naik made no response. She also thought of renewing her contacts with the Nizam by helping him against the Peshwa,(44) and at the same time tried to negotiate with Murar Rao Ghorpade of Gatti in Karnatak.(45) But her negotiations with the Mughals bore no fruit. (46) The Peshwa's partisans were not in the dark about these activities and advised him to keep a proper watch on the fort.(47) Another important chief whom she wanted to bring within her fold was Raghuji Bhonsle.(48) She banked on Raghuji's support, because he had hitherto been an opponent of the Peshwa. She constantly sent her servants and letters to Raghuji with a request to come to her assistance personally or to send Piraji Naik with a strong force. But Raghuji did not come, nor did

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43. Ibid., 9.
44. Ibid, XXVI, 47.
45. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, No. 81.
46. Ibid., No. 114.
47. S.P.D., VI, 12.
48. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No. 11.

he ever reply to her letters. Then she tried to flatter his vanity by praising him for the services he had rendered to the Maratha Raj in these words, "Like me, you have also got a place of importance in the kingdom. Being a faithful servant, the Maratha kingdom is proud of you." But Raghuji was observing the situation and the party politics of Satara, so he told Tarabai that he would not say anything unless he met the Peshwa, and he was not going to join her party, whether he had to lose his life or to suffer. Thus, Raghuji was loyal to the cause of the Peshwa and was not willing to undo the friendly relations that had existed between them.(49) He was faithful to the Peshwa and he assured him his full support, though he had been receiving constant communications from Tarabai(50)

Tarabai's attitude towards Raghuji was not very cordial from the beginning. She was in great need of money so she wrote to Vishwanath Bhat to recover all the government dues from Raghuji.(51) But the shrewd Raghuji moved with the times. He had no illusion about the Peshwa's formidable power, and his own affairs were in a state of jeopardy. He was heavily in debt, (52) as his campaigns had failed to bring him money. After cool deliberations he had come to the conclusion that it was not politic to oppose

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49. S.P.D. XX, 58 and 59,

50. Ibid. VI, 151. Venkatrao Moreshwar also gave some idea to the Peshwa as to how Tarabai was trying to win over Raghuji and other sardars to her side. But Raghuji was quite firm in his assurance to the Peshwa to stand by him.

51. Ibid, 186; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, Nos. 9 and 11.

52. S.P.D. VI, 25.

the Peshwa. He was, therefore, prepared to enter into a compromise with him if he was allowed a free hand in Berar, Gondwana and Bengal. The Peshwa was also in a mood to allow these concessions provided Raghuji abstained from meddling in Satara affairs. So when Raghuji arrived at Satara on April 1, 1750,(53) a meeting took place between him and the Peshwa, and Raghuji immediately fell in line with him. Years had softened his turbulent spirit and he soon let Balaji knew that he would not, if confirmed in his eastern possessions, disturb the peace of the realm. The Peshwa willingly granted his demands and issued a new Sanad for Berar, Gondwana and Bengal and some Jagir lands, which had belonged to the Pratinidhi, adjoining Berar, were transferred to him as a reward for his services to the kingdom.(54) Raghuji expressed his thorough reliance on the Peshwa, and placed his entire trust in him, and assured the Peshwa of his hearty cooperation. Though repeatedly solicited by Tarabai to hurry upto her assistance, he turned a deaf ear to her entreaties and assured the Peshwa that he stood by him through thick and thin. (55) Govind Rao Chitnis was already a partisan of the Peshwa.

(e) Raghuji and the Peshwa

From the very beginning Raghuji and the Peshwa were not

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53. Ibid., XXVI, 55.
54. Wills, C.U., op.cit., p.50.
55. S.P.D. XX, 43 and 63; S.P.D. VI, 23, 67 and 148.

on good terms. On the death of Bajirao, the Deccan party made a fresh effort to stop the hereditary Prime Ministership of the Bhat family. The leader of this party was then Raghuji. He was the personal favourite of King Shahu. A long enmity had divided the royal favourite and the first minister. Raghuji used all his influence with the King to prevent the nomination of Bajirao's son Balaji as the first minister. Sakarwai also fomented an intrigue to replace Balaji from the post of first minister with a creature of her own in the office. She could adopt anyone she pleased and in his name govern so long as life lasted, the Maratha empire. Raghuji gave her his support, so too did the Dabhades and the Gaikwads. The King, however, was wise enough to see that for all his skill as a hunter, and his courage as a soldier, Raghuji was unfit to be the Peshwa. There was yet another candidate in the field, namely Babuji Naik, the brother-in-law of Bajirao. He was nothing more than a successful business man and money lender. Raghuji then supported Babuji Naik for securing the robes of the Peshwa, but he was not successful, and from thence Babuji Naik became an enemy of the Peshwa. At the instance of the Pratinidhi, who disliked Raghuji even more than his chitpavan rival, King Shahu on June 25, 1740 appointed Balaji in his father's place.(56)

After getting the robes of the Peshwa, Balaji tried to check the expanding activities of Raghuji, and in 1743, he defeated

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56. Kavya Itihas Sangraha, No.114; Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Varshik Itivratta Shake, 1835; Kavya Itihas Sangraha, No.10; Shrimant Pradhan Yanchi Shakavali.

Raghuji in Bengal. Then Shahu divided the spheres of activities among Raghuji and the Peshwa.(57). Again, when Raghuji invaded Karnatak and captured the fort of Trichinopoly, Peshwa too invaded that region in 1744, so as to check the advance of Bhonsles in southern most part of India. They fought open battles in Central India and Bengal. Thus the relationship between Raghuji and the Peshwa was not always cordial and friendly. Only to oppose the common enemy, or for fulfilling their selfish aims, they used to become one party, otherwise both tried to let down each other in the political field.

After defeating Raghuji, the Peshwa turned his eyes towards Raghuji's ally Babuji Naik, who was realising the chauth and Sardeshmukhi from the provinces of Bidnoor and Savnoor. The Peshwa offered bribe to the Pathan of Bidnoor, and of other places, and thus tried to check the activities of Babuji Naik in that region.(58)

Later on Raghuji joined in conspiracy with Tarabai to oust the Peshwa from the office, but secrecy in this regard could not be maintained. Nana Saheb Peshwa himself wrote to Sindhia and Holkar about the conspiracy backed by Tarabai with Maratha Sardars with the intention of snatching the office of the Peshwa from Nana Saheb and handing it to a cousin of Ramdas Pant (Dewan of the Nizam) or retained it himself. Therefore, she promised to give help to Salabat Jang against the Marathas if he supported Tarabai in ful-

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57. Bharatvarsha- pp. 46-49.

58. Sane, K.N., Kavya Itihas Sangraha Patren Yadi Waghaire, pp.67-78.

filling her aims, i.e. in casting out the Peshwa. Other Maratha sardars like Raghuji and his successors, Fateh Singh Bhonsle, the Angre brothers, the Gaikwads and Dabhades (59), all were helping Tarabai to oust the Peshwa from his post. In the rainy season this conspiracy was hatched. The parties had taken a vow to deprive the Peshwa of the post. She kept upto the last secret political relations with all the leading Maratha sardars. Ramdas Pant also approved the scheme and wrote a letter to Tarabai, but the undercurrents of intrigues came to the knowledge of the Peshwa, because the correspondence by chance fell into the hands of Govind Rao Chitnis, a partisan of the Peshwa.(60) The Peshwa also made a reference to this intrigue in 1758.(61)

The Peshwa, after a bitter experience of the intrigues and factions of the capital, had made up his mind long before the late king's death to assume all power into his own hands. Ramchandra Baba and Purandares were his chief advisers in working out his policy. He first secured the cordial support of that powerful chief Raghuji, and gradually removed all the offices of government to Poona, thus leaving the Chhatrapati and his grandmother free to do what they liked at Satara, but indirectly compelling both Ram Raja and Tarabai to submit to his wishes both as regards their own personal needs and matters concerning details of the administra-

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59. S.P.D. VI, 207 and 209.
60. Kavya Itihas Sangraha No.99.
61. S.P.D.XXV, 90 and 101, also make a reference to the intrigues of Tarabai with the Nizam. This probably centred round Ramdas Pant. V.K. Rajwade's letter No.207, of Volume VI is also interesting in this respect. Itihas Sangraha- Peshwa Daftaranteel Mahiti, No. 8.

tion. Chimnaji Narain Sachiv and the Pratinidhi's Mutalik Yamaji Shivdev were her chief supporters and obstructed any move on the part of the Peshwa.

From December 26, 1749 to April 18, 1750, the Peshwa stayed at Satara, doing his utmost to sustain the new Chhatrapati's power, and get him into a proper trim to carry out his duties in the best interest of the state. During this period he found himself so much entangled in the domestic concerns of the royal house that he could not attend to the external affairs of a momentous character. He, therefore, sent his trusted agents to Raghuji and invited him to Satara with the utmost speed as the fittest person of responsible position for handling the situation. Raghuji arrived there about the beginning of April and the two surveyed the situation together for a week or two. The Peshwa then asked Raghuji to stay at Satara and to make his best endeavours to put Ram Raja in the proper way to discharge his duties. The Peshwa wrote to Dixit, "I have now been at Satara for seven months. Constant bickerings are going on with the new Chhatrapati. He is entirely nerveless unable to make up his mind and act on his own initiative. I wonder if you can suggest means by which I can secure the master's good will and have freedom for myself to attend to the pressing matters of the state."(62) Raghuji stayed at Satara till July 8, 1750, and the Peshwa went to Poona on April 18, 1750 where his presence was needed for the thread ceremony of his son Vishwasrao,

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62. Rajwade, V.K., op.cit., Vol.XI- No.71.

and the marriage of Sadashivrao, who had recently lost his first wife. But the Peshwa was also worried as to what attitude would Raghuji take with regard to Ram Raja. Would he denounce Ram Raja as an imposter? Would he declare himself independent? Would he join the Nizam in an attack on the Maratha kingdom? The Peshwa, however, won over Raghuji who had come to Satara for coronation, and had followed the Peshwa to Poona to settle his future plans in consultation with him. His disposition was pacific towards the Peshwa, but for form's sake the great noble still questioned Ram Raja's origin, and demanded that Tarabai should reach with her grandson in his presence. She did so; and, satisfied with this evidence, Raghuji declared his entire adherence to the new government, and gave his assent to the Peshwa to the propriety of the plans submitted for his consideration.(63)

Tarabai, on the other hand, had her own game to play. She tried to secure power, but when she found that neither Ram Raja nor the Peshwa would allow her a free hand in the administration, she went to Singhgad with the intention of raising the standard of revolt there. The Peshwa tried to win her over by persuation, and invited her to Poona, an invitation she accepted.

Ram Raja was left at Satara in isolation with no influential supporter except his sister Daryabai Nimbalkar. His condition soon grew desperate for want of funds. Her sister Daryabai joined Raghuji and other partisans of the Peshwa in advising Ram Raja to

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63. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol. I, p.445.

make up his differences with Balaji Bajirao, the Peshwa. Ram Raja, therefore, finally accepted the Peshwa's invitation to visit Poona,(64) and settle the matters with him as best as he could. Tarabai had already arrived there. Ram Raja left for Poona in August 1750, along with Raghuji.

Tarabai, Chhatrapati, Raghuji, Sarlashkar Appaji Somvanshi, Sindhia, Holkar- all the assembled leaders of opinion and thought had full discussions together over the situation. They sat together for days and weeks and had heart to heart talks. The Peshwa tried his best to come to a kind of working compromise, so that the administration should run smoothly and rapid expansion of the Maratha power could be assured. Such a conference was indeed unique in Maratha history both in weight and in variety of views. Hence the Peshwa took the final resolution of removing all official work from Satara to Poona, leaving the Chhatrapati and Tarabai to themselves at Satara. All executive power remained in his own hands. Raghuji heartily supported him and departed for Nagpur on September 8, 1750, after arriving at a concerted settlement for the future administration of the Maratha state. But after this prolonged discussion, Tarabai left for Satara entirely dissatisfied with policy, the Peshwa was pursuing. Ram Raja had already fallen out with his grandmother Tarabai, who, finding him incorrigible, managed to keep him under arrest in Satara fort after his return from Poona, a position to

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64. S.P.D.VI, 116. Fateh Singh Bhonsle had an interview with Ram Raja and wrote to the Peshwa that the King was ready to fall in completely with plan of the Peshwa.

which he had quietly to submit for the rest of his life.

Thus, the situation of Satara was very complicated, and the position of the King was hopeless. The state of things was disordered. The attendants of the late King Shahu, both male and female, approached Raghuji with a request to settle their affairs of maintenance.(65) A repressive attitude was adopted by Ram Raja against Santubai, the illegitimate daughter of Shahu. He kept her in confinement at his own palace. Her attendant Gangaji was tortured. Purandare and Raghuji intervened to no purpose.(66) Later on the King expressed his willingness to Nana Purandare to release Santubai.(67) Thus, Ram Raja was bent upon making mischief; in fact he wanted to assert his own independence. So the Peshwa was asked to take strong action against him.

(f) Ram Raja tries to Secure Raghuji's Cooperation

To make his position strong Ram Raja also tried to win over Raghuji.(68) The Peshwa was informed that the attempts were made on behalf of Ram Raja to alienate some of the sardars from the Peshwa's side by granting them inams and saranjamis, such as to Raghuji, Trimbakji Bhonsle, Rao Chitnis (Brother of Govind Rao),

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65. S.P.D. VI, 71.
66. Ibid., VI, 68, 69, 97 and 99.
67. Ibid, 68 and 71.
68. Ibid., 20; Ibid XX, 57.

Visaji Govind, Baburao Upadhik, Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Murar Rao Ghorpade, who was given the saranjamai of Karnatak.(69) Grant of money was given to Raghuji and the robes of honour were bestowed upon him by the King. So Raghuji assured the King of his help.(70) Ram Raja conferred with the leaders - Burhanji Mohite, Sidbhat and Raghuji at Satara, and relied on the support of some men such as Sham Rai, Nimbalkar, Jadhav, Sarlashkar, Raghuji, Govind Rao, Yamaji Pant and the Havaldar of Satara.(71)

Ram Raja even paid a visit to Raghuji at his quarters and befriended him. He received twenty four coins, one horse and a dress of honour as nazar from Raghuji. Raghuji demanded a village as a place of residence on this side, which was subsequently promised to him. (72) Thus, the King tried his best to win over Raghuji to his side, and every attempt was made to incite Raghuji against the Peshwa, but he was in no mood to oppose the Peshwa's claims and as such acquiesced in the situation. Ram Raja had wanted to equip the fort of Singhgad, so as to keep it under his control. The Peshwa's partisans were not in the dark about these activities and advised him to keep a proper watch at the fort.(73) So Ram Raja was brought round by reprimand from Raghuji and he was finally forced to handover the fort of Singhgad to the Peshwa.(74) Seeing his helpless position Ram Raja was also reluctant to oppose the wishes of the Peshwa.(75)

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69. Ibid, VI, 19.
70. Ibid., 22, 24, 29, 31, 101 and 102.
71. Ibid., 62 and 85.
72. S.P.D.VI, 76,77 and 84.
73. Ibid., 12.
74. Ibid., 52 and 59.
75. Ibid., 47.

On the other hand the opponents of the Peshwa were trying to create bad blood between Raghuji and the Peshwa. Raghuji received anonymous letters warning him to be alert against a surprise attack by the Peshwa. (76) But Raghuji was an old bird. Knowing that both Ram Raja and Tarabai were often all broken reeds, he had decided to befriend the Peshwa in order to rehabilitate his own position with his powerful support. He told Ram Raja plainly that his administration was hopelessly bad, and besides other defects it lacked unity of purpose.(77) He sometimes even reprimanded him severely,(78) for his vacillating policy. Finding Raghuji lukeworm, Ram Raja tried to corrupt other sardars of the Peshwa,(79) but even there he did not get any response.

Tarabai continued her game of winning over Jayappa Sindhia and Malharrao Holkar,(80) but these two loyal coherents of the Peshwa's house, though discontended on account of certain reasons, prudently kept away. Her intrigues for the removal of Ram Raja from power were reported to the Peshwa by Govindrao Moreshwar.(81) She also suggested that Ram Raja should be removed and Sambhaji of Kolhapur be placed on the throne of Satara. She also appealed to

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76. Ibid,, 38, 50 and 59.
77. S.P.D.VI, 50.
78. Ibid., 59.
79. Ibid., 19 and 86.
80. Ibid., 41.
81. Ibid.,XXVI, 58.

the Maratha blood of Raghuji(82) and Fateh Singh Bhonsle to save the state from Brahman domination; but none of them listened to her either because the Peshwa had already taken them into his confidence and they were whole-heartedly supporting his policy, or because they did not believe in the cry raised by Tarabai or because they found themselves unequal to the task of openly challenging the Peshwa.

Tarabai did not remain quiet for long. She soon realized how the Peshwa had succeeded in his design of silencing every opponent, and she continued to intrigue from Satara with Dabhade, Damaji Gaikwad and the Nizam by helping him against the Peshwa.(83) The result was that when in the early months of 1751, the Peshwa was away in Karnatak, Damaji Gaikwad came from Gujarat plundering and devastating the country with the purpose of putting down the power of the Peshwa. Gaikwad instigated by Tarabai tried to attack Poona. But before that he was defeated. Ramdas Pant also came with his army. Other sardars also mobilised their armies and Ramdas Pant attacked the Peshwa. Platoons of the French commanded by Bussy also joined Ramdas Pant. Raghuji tried to negotiate with the Peshwa, but afterwards he went over to the Mughals, because they offered him a Jagir and he promptly joined them. Babuji Naik was also against the Peshwa, because he was deprived of Karnatak. In this affair the Peshwa

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82. S.P.D. VI, 148 and 151. She was, however, able to obtain the support of Ranoji Bhonsle, a member of the Nagpur family(S.P.D. XXVI, 66).

83. S.P.D.XXVI, 47.

stated that he had incurred a new debt of twenty five lakh of rupees. The Nizam consolidated his power in the Deccan, because of Tarabai's treachery to the national cause, and her intrigue with the Nizam, Bhonsle of Nagpur, Angres and Gaikwad to pin down the Peshwa. In this way Tarabai with her partisans tried to create a lot of troubles. But the Peshwa was adament in defeating these intrigues.(84)

Thus Chhatrapati, the Peshwa and Tarabai all tried to seek the help and cooperation of Raghuji in their plans and policies. And Raghuji also did not adopt a hostile attitude towards any of these three persons, but very shrewdly went to the side of the Peshwa with the intention and purpose of settling his own affairs with the Peshwa, in which he was successful.

SECTION II

Raghuji's last days and the question of succession

(a) Raghuji's death

During his last days Raghuji suffered from abdominal pain due to some stomach trouble(85), so he called Konherram Kolhatkar to

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84. Kavya Itihas Sangraha - No.78.

85. Raghuji had long suffered from a stomach complaint and was almost bed-ridden during the last two or three years of his life. Hence he began to lead a peaceful life and did not concern himself with the various important projects and expeditions which the Peshwa restlessly carried out in the Karnatak region.

Nagpur before his death. He wished that he might remain beside him at the time of his death, because of the loyal services of Konherram, he was very much indebted to him. But due to old age and the grief on the death of his brother Bhaskar Ram, he did not come to Nagpur and instead sent his son Baburao there. Before his death Raghuji explained the administration of his kingdom to Janoji and Baburao. Instructions about the household management were also given to Bhikambhat, Rambhat and Baburao(86). At this time his condition was improving.(87)

Raghuji called back his son Mudhoji from the fort of Chhatisgarh. At that time his illegitimate son Mohan Singh was the incharge of the management of Chhatisgarh. Mudhoji came to Nagpur. A message came from Gawilgarh that the fort of Gawilgarh could be won easily. Raghuji was pleased with this news, and thinking that this place could be good for residence, decided to send his son Babaji there who, however, declined to go there. So Raghuji sent there his wisest son Mudhoji.(88) He had also wanted to go there personally, but failed to do so because of his failing health. The Fort was conquered without a blow. While at Gawilgarh, Mudhoji enquired about the health of his father.(89) His sons Janoji and Mudhoji were not on good terms. So Raghuji's trustworthy lieutenants

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86. Baburao Konher Kolhatkar was his intimate adviser who cooperated with Janoji, Raghuji's eldest son, in transacting current business pertaining to his rule of Nagpur.
87. Vaidya Daftar- Vol. V, No. 56.
88. Perhaps, because Mudhoji was also aspiring for getting the robes of Sena Sahib Subah, which Raghuji did not want, so he sent away Mudhoji at the time of his death.
89. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.43.

Bhikambhat, Rambhat and Baburao were engaged to bring Mudhoji from Gawilgarh to Nagpur for the reconciliation of Mudhoji and Janoji.(90) So Mudhoji, after entrusting the management of the fort of Gawilgarh, started for homeward. But on the way he got the news of his father's death.

On February 14, 1755, that gallant old chief had died of dysentry.(91) At the time of his death, Janoji and Sabaji were beside him. He died nearly at the age of sixty, at the zenith of his prosperity. His funeral rites were performed at Anjangaon. His Samadhi is in Nagpur at the site of the cremation ground of the Bhonsles. Because Mudhoji could not reach Nagpur at the time of his death, so he went to Surjiaryani village and performed all the death ceremonies and then went back to Nagpur.(92) Raghuji had thirteen wives. His six wives out of thirteen became Sati with him.(93)

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90. Ibid., No.53.
91. S.P.D. XX, 79, 80 and 81; Vaidya Daftar Vol.V-Nos.9 and 60. Duff gives Raghuji's death as March 1753, which is wrong. (Duff,Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.471) Jenkins, R., op.cit., p.56 and Wills C.U. op.cit., p.22, support the date of 1755.
92. Kale,Y.M., op.cit., p.114.
93. In S.P.D. XX, 81 and in Parasnis, D.B. and Kinciad,C.A.,op.cit., p.323, it is mentioned that all the thirteen wives of Raghuji became Sati with him. Kinciad and Parasnis say he died of dysentry on February 14, 1755, and add that "Thirteen Maratha ladies had in his honour, thrown themselves on his flaming pyre". The local Marathi chronicles say that Raghuji had thirteen wives of whom only eight became Sati. In Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.I, essay No.96, we find that seven wives of Raghuji burnt themselves on the burning pyre. In S.P.D.XX, 79 and 80 we find that only his six wives had become sati. This seems to be true. According to Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.60- six wives burnt themselves with him as Sati. According to Sardesai, G.S., not his thirteen wives, but six wives and seven hand maids (total thirteen) are said to have immolated themselves on his funeral pyre,(op.cit., Vol.II, p.342).

(b) The Question of Succession

At the time of his death, he had four sons - Janoji, Bimbaji, Sabaji and Mudhoji. Mudhoji and Bimbaji were the sons of his elder wife and Janoji and Sabaji were the sons of his younger wife. Janoji was the eldest among the four of them. He divided his territory amongst his four sons. Raghuji, however, left the supremacy to Janoji, with the certain prospect of being confirmed as Sena Sahib Subah by the Peshwa. He recommended to his sons the advantage of preserving unity in the Maratha empire and amongst each other.(94) But after his death, his four sons, though able and clever, became victims of continued family dissension and selfish intrigue, often playing into the hands of their advisers and thereby bringing ruin upon themselves and affording the Peshwa a long on sought opportunity for mastering the semi-independent state of Nagpur. There was disorder and chaos in Nagpur after his death.

According to the wishes of Raghuji, his place at the head of affairs was taken by Janoji, but this was resented by Mudhoji. He was younger to Janoji but being the son of Raghuji's elder wife, claimed the title of Sena Sahib Subah for himself, disregarding the injunction of his father. This gave rise to a complicated dispute about the succession and considerably weakened the position of that principality. Janoji also began to make his position strong. He took the fort of Gawilgarh by treachery from Mudhoji who had con-

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94. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.471.

quered it.(95) Being the son of Raghuji's elder wife, Mudhoji wrote a letter to Janoji - "Ashirvad", and further added, "I am of elder mother, you are of younger, therefore, I am the master of all Jagir. Hence you should obey my orders." Accordingly he sent his army to Varhad to realise Khandanya. Sadashiv Hari was the Dewan of Mudhoji. He took a loan from Patil and Deshmukh and paid the dues of Mudhoji. On the side of Mudhoji there were two brothers named Dinkar Vinayak and Shivaji Vinayak. Nar Singh Rao Bhawani was the third Prabhu Grahastha with him. Mahipat Rao Dinkar, the son of Vinayak Dinkar, was the trustworthy man of Mudhoji. Except the above mentioned men, there were no sardars and politicians of note with him. But with Janoji were all the sardars and politicians of Raghuji's time viz. Baburao Konherram Kolhatkar, Rakhmaji Ganesh Chitnavis and Trimbakji Raje Bhonsle. Like this Krishnaji Govind, the subedar of Varhad, Narhar Ballal, the subedar of Nagpur, Shivbhat Sathe, the subedar of Katak were all on his side. In the same way all the old sardars, viz. Raghuji Karande, Bimbaji Vanjal, Narhoji Nayak, Shivaji Keshav Talkute, Girmaji Khanderao, Anandrao Vagh and Krishnaji Atole were with Janoji. All these sardars conferred with each other about the successor of the Saranjami. In the end all decided that because Janoji was the

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95. Janoji acquired the fort of Gawilgarh ~~by Gawilgarh~~ by treachery. He sent a man named Jayaji Bhai to Mudhoji for acquiring that fort for himself. Jayaji Bhai met Mudhoji on way and told him that he was against Janoji. Thereupon, Mudhoji trusted him and appointed him at the fort of Gawilgarh. After getting the fort under his control, Jayaji explicited his real intention to Mudhoji. Later on he told Janoji that how by treachery he took over the fort under his control.

eldest son, therefore, he should get the title of Sena Sahib Subah. For securing the robes for Janoji, Trimbakji Raje Bhonsle and Baburao Konher were sent to Poona to meet the Peshwa.

(c) Janoji gets the robes of Sena Sahib Subah

On getting the news that Janoji was trying to secure the robes of Sena Sahib Subah, Mudhoji began to create disturbances. At two or three places in Varhad, clashes between Janoji and Mudhoji took place. Mudhoji sent a message to the Peshwa. The Peshwa took advantage of the succession dispute to reduce the power of the Bhonsle family and to persuade it to accept the Peshwa's primacy. He coveted a large amount for the succession fee. Janoji's adviser Devaji Pant Chorghode went to Poona and obtained the Peshwa's decision in his master's favour by promising to pay rupees two and half lakh as nazar. Mudhoji was excited to opposition by the Peshwa who was jealous of the rapid rise of the Nagpur state.(96) So Mudhoji opposed Janoji's succession, but was reduced to obedience by force of arms. Janoji on agreeing to the terms to which his father had subscribed,(97) obtained from the Peshwa formal investiture as Sena Sahib Subah and sanctions to the treaty with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, which had transferred Orissa to Raghuji's possession in 1751. Owing to the time lost in operations against Mudhoji, Janoji was prevented from receiving his title and investiture until

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96. Jenkins, report of 1826, p.56.
97. Terms subscribed were furnishing 10,000 horses, when called upon for the service of the State, and of paying nine lakh of rupees annually to defray the expenses of the Raja's establishment.

the Peshwa's return from the Karnatak. According to the traditions of those times, Janoji had to pay seven lakh of rupees as Nazar to the Peshwa, for obtaining the robes of Sena Sahib Subah. Mudhoji got the title of Sena Dhurandar, and was given the mahals of Chandrapur and Chhatisgarh jointly with his brother Bimbaji. Sabaji was given Darrah and seventeen other mahals, and all the other remaining mahals came under the control of Janoji.(98) The Peshwa ratified this decision after exacting a present of twenty lakh of rupees from the four brothers.(99) Thus, the war of succession between Janoji and Mudhoji ended. But the Peshwa's decision of dividing the estate among the brothers weakened the chiefship and was not liked by Janoji or his Karbharis.

Before that, however, the Peshwa sent both Janoji and Mudhoji in an expedition against Savnoor (in Karnatak) along with Sadashivrao Bhau with the result that the question of succession to the Nagpur State came to be abnormally postponed. This attack took place in 1756. Both the brothers showed valour in this war. After this invasion, Janoji came back to Varhad, and Mudhoji after staying for a few days at Poona went to Chandrapur.

Later on a dispute arose amohgthe brothers about the distribution of the money brought by Shivbhat Sathe, the Subedar

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98. Wills, C.U., op.cit., p.22; Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I,pp. 550-51; Kinciad and Parasnis, op.cit., p.323, Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.I, Essay No.96, p.176. The decision was given in 1757 but the actual Sanads were granted in 1761. (Majumdar, R.C.,op.cit., p.244).

99. Sardesai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.II, p.342.

of Orissa, from Katak. He came to Nagpur with treasury. On the way Bimbaji called him at Chhattisgarh. From there he came to Nagpur with twelve lakh of rupees. Mudhoji also asked for a share in it. In the end, at Paithan, by the mediation of Vasudev Dixit of Kayagaon, the dispute regarding money was solved. At that time the Peshwa was also present at Paithan. It seems that Sathe had come there. Hanspuri Gosavi of the Mandoli of Satara and Baburao Konher acted as mediators in the quarrel among these brothers.

For a time the Bhonsle brothers worked together and helped the Peshwa in his attack upon the Nizam at Sindkhed. But the domestic dissension of the four brothers never came to an end. There were endless disputes among the four brothers often leading to civil strife, and as a result the Nagpur State fast declined in power and prestige. The Bhonsles engrossed in their domestic feuds, took little part in the common affairs of the Maratha state and even failed to assert their claim to the Chauth of Bengal. The Peshwa's assumption of the leadership of the Maratha State and his decision in respect of the Bhonsle principality so antagonised the Bhonsle brothers that they lent a willing ear to the intrigues of the enemies of the Maratha State.(100) Raghuji's sons could not keep high the standard of the Bhonsle kingdom.

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100. Desai, G.S., op.cit., Vol.I,p.342; Majumdar, R.C.,op.cit.,p.244.

CHAPTER VII

RAGHUJI'S ADMINISTRATION AND HIS INSTITUTIONS

SECTION I

Central Government and the Administration of the Provinces

The set up of Raghuji's Central Government was a replica of the one at Poona. His new administrative set up in Nagpur forming part of Devgarh below the Ghats was more or less a prototype of the system common in other parts of the Maratha country.

When Raghuji I was offered the robes of Sena Sahib Subah, he first proceeded to Berar, and then to Nagpur and was accompanied by a number of experienced officers of the Rajmandal to Nagpur who were assigned important posts.(1)

1. Konher Ram Mujumdar was to be the Diwan of Raghuji.
2. Rakhmaji Ganesh Ranadive, was appointed as the Secretary Chitanavis.
3. Narsing rao Chimaji Prabhu was to work as assistant to Rakhmaji Ganesh - The Chitanavis.
4. Bhaskar Ram was put incharge of the army.
5. Sankaraji Rakhamaji became the Potnis and was also incharge

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1. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., pp.42-44; Maharashtra State Gazetteer, Nagpur District, p.103.

of the Jamdarkhana and of the stores.

6. Mahadaji Prabhu was to act as the Phadnavis, i.e. the Secretary for finances.

7. Vyankoji Pant and Raghopant were appointed as Bakshi, pay-master of the army.

8. Anant Bhat Chitale became the Sikkanavis or keeper of the seal.

9. Vedamurti Visvambhar Vaidya was to help Rakhamaji Ganesh, the Chitanavis.

The Diwan was the Chief Minister of the Bhonsles and represented them in all the matters of the state. He was sometimes addressed as the Karabhari. The word Karabhari in addition to being synonymous with Diwan means a manager. Its use in this sense shows how the Diwan or the Karabhari was all-in-all.

The Chitanavis was the general secretary, and his office continued to be in the family of Rakhamaji Ganesh throughout the reign of the Bhonsles. His duties were as follows:

(a) To carry on the private correspondence of the Raja;

(b) To issue all kinds of orders aduyapatra and takidpatra;

(c) To issue permits and tax free passes, and to prepare the same; and

(d) To date all important papers.

In addition, the Chitanavis tendered advice to the Raja in all diplomatic matters. By his very office, he was closely associated with the ruling Bhonsle.

For the loyal services of Rakhamaji Ganesh, Raghuji gave him Varambh in the Umred tehsil of Nagpur district as Inam in perpetuity. (2) Bhaskar Ram was his General. He distinguished himself in the Bengal expeditions of Raghuji. He, however, does not seem to have had the entire army of Raghuji under his command. There were, for instance, other noblemen like Raghuji Karande, Anand Rao Vagh, Balaji Ghatge, Zunjaravan and Sambhaji Sirke having armies under their own command, they themselves having directly responsible to Raghuji.

The Potnis was incharge of the treasury, royal jewellry, valuables and stores. He was to credit to the treasury presents, Nazrana, tribute and Peskars etc. and to maintain the accounts.

The Phadnavis was the secretary of the finances and the Bakshi or paymaster of the army. The Sikkanavis was the keeper of the seal of the Bhonsles. He was to put the seal on all important state documents.

The office of the Munshi, the secretary for foreign affairs, seems to have been created by the latter Bhonsles. He was usually well versed in Persian, and transacted all the correspondence in that language.

The Subedar of the subah or the province held military as well as civil command within the subah.

The Varhad Pande was responsible for land revenue.

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2. From the unpublished papers of Srimant Raja Balasaheb Chitanavis of Nagpur.

Sometimes two officers were combined in one person as in the case of Bhavani Kalo who was inchatge of the army, but who also acted as the Diwan.(3)

These officers held Jagirs for their services. The Maratha noblemen were known as Mankaris and were directly responsible to the Raja. There were no hard and fast rules regarding the duties attached to a particular office. For instance, Divakar Pant Gorghade, who was the Diwan, also acted as the ambassador of the Bhonsles to the East India Company. Similarly subedar in a distant province like Katak acted in various capacities as the man on the spot.(4)

These posts assigned to different persons shed light on the principal structure of Nagpur administration. Shahu's intention in sending his own men with Raghuji was to help him to carry on the administration of Nagpur successfully, and at the same time to keep an effective check over Raghuji. However, he was not successful in his aim of keeping central control over the distant noblemen. It depended upon the personality of Shahu alone. After Shahu's death the central authority of the Chhatrapati remained only in name and the Maratha Sardars tried to be independent within their own territories. This is borne out by the serious differences which existed between the Peshwa and the Bhonsles from the beginning to the end.(5)

The Bhonsle administration was direct and efficient, though

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3. Kale, Y.M. op.cit.,p.285; Maharashtra State Gazetteer,op.cit., pp. 103-104.

4. Ibid., p.104.

5. Maharashtra State Gazetteer, op.cit., p.103.

inelegant. It was free from burdensome mannerism and less paper-ridden than that of the Peshwa.

The Bhonsles held their Darbar (Court) in an open Varandah. They sat on the throne with the sword and the shield placed in front. Ministers and military officers attended the Darbar. All business which required the Raja's attention was openly transacted there. The Raja was accessible to the people, he heard their grievances and redressed the wrongs. The Sena Sahib Subah was not an absolute ruler. Constitutionally, he was accountable to the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa. The younger brothers of Janoji Bhonsle, the Sena Sahib Subah were assigned territories wherein they were more or less independent. Mudhoji the younger brother of Janoji Bhonsle was given Chanda and the title of Sena Dhurandar. The two younger brothers Bimbaji and Sabaji were posted at Chhatisgarh and Darva respectively. Other relations of the Bhonsles too were given important assignments.(6)

During the Peshwa period the feudal barons, both new and old, exercised sovereign authority within their fiefs, although the Peshwa had the prerogative of appointing their chief officers. The Dewans of the Gaikwad, the Holkar, and the Sindhia were always appointed by the Peshwa, but all of them claimed uncontrolled exercise of sovereign rights.(7) The villages over which these Sardars ruled, were self contained units and their democratic institutions remained

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6. Maharashtra State Gazetteer, op.cit., p.105.

7. Vad, G.C.; Kafiyats Yadis etc. p.54..

unaffected and undisturbed till the Peshwa's government was replaced by the more centralised administration of the English.

At the head of the Government was the Peshwa who had power to act as the deputy of the Satara Raja. He was, therefore, the head of the feudal nobles and also one of them at the same time. The feudal nobles rendered military service in return for their fiefs and Saranjams or were independent rulers in everything but name. Thus, the whole constitution was a curious combination of democracy and feudal autocracy.

The revenue, whether collected in the annexed territories or exacted in (the shape of) contributions in the neighbouring dominions was divided between the Peshwa and his Sardars. The Sardar obtained Saranjami or fief in lieu of his stipulated services and also directly from the King, with a kindly eye. The number of Saranjams they created was enormous. These varied in size and character as well as in importance as the stipulated quota for which they were granted and ranged from one to twenty two thousand Sawars or horsemen. The burden of the civil administration and the military defence of the major portion of the empire was thrown on these Saranjam holders. Their interest thus became, or was expected to be, strictly identified with those of the state. As under the earlier scheme of Balaji Vishwanath, the chief Sardar could (with the Peshwa's permission) lead expeditions of conquest and annexation, which would at once enhance their own importance and contribute to the expansion of the empire.(8) In practice, however, these Sardars failed to identify

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8. Sen, S.N., Administrative System of the Marathas, pp.49-51.

their interests with those of the State. They did not maintain the stipulated force. They did not always pay their own men according to the scale laid down by the Peshwa.(9) The number and quality of their horses were also generally below the required standard.

In granting Saranjami the Peshwa took care to place rival chiefs in the same area and to make some use of their mutual jealousy. Govind Pant Bundela, the founder of the Sagar family, was used as a check on the Bhonsle of Nagpur. The revenue of Malwa was divided among the Sindhia, the Holkar, and the Pawar, the Peshwa retaining a store for himself. Thus, the grant of Saranjamis, in conquered territories stimulated the spirit of conquest, and the division of the revenue was calculated by the Peshwa to check any undue increase of the Sardar's power, and at the same time to secure cooperation by unity of interests, a result which the Peshwa failed to secure. Sardars like Sindhia and Holkar grew more and more powerful, and although grave national dangers rallied them to the Peshwa's side, the feudal tendency and individual jealousy ultimately led to the disruption of the empire. The Sindhia fought against the Holkar, the Bhonsle of Nagpur levied Ghasdana on the Peshwa's subjects, and constant war resulted in public insecurity. This was the real source of weakness of the Maratha empire.(10)

Upto 1803, the Bhonsle administration was on the whole successful. At least the first four of the Bhonsles were military

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9. S.P.D. IX, pp. 310-314.

10. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.445.

chiefs with the habits of rough soldiers, connected by blood and by constant familiar intercourse with all their principal officers. Descended from the class of cultivators, they ever favoured and fostered order and were seldom cruel to the people. Upto 1792, their territories were rarely the theatre of hostilities and the area of cultivation and revenue continued to increase under a fairly equitable and extremely primitive system of government. After the Treaty of Deogan in 1803, this was changed.(11)

The Maratha chronicles pay very little attention to the administrative system of their times and the economic condition of their country. They confine themselves mainly to the narration of political events. Consequently, we learn very little from them. Shivaji was not the creator of a new system. He modified and reformed what he had inherited from his Hindu and Mohammedan predecessors.(12) The village communities served the needs of the time admirably. Shivaji decided to leave them undisturbed in their internal organisation. In fact the village republics exercised almost the same powers, enjoyed the same privileges, and underwent the same responsibilities from the time of their origin to the establishment of the British Government in India.(13)

At the head of the Government was the King himself assisted by a Council of State. It was knowm as the Ashta-Pradhan Council,

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11. Russell, R.V., Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series, Central Provinces, p.18, Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.XVIII, p.307.
12. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.27.
13. Ibid., p.37.

as eight Ministers had seats in it.(14) Shivaji took good care to keep all officers, both high and low, free from a hereditary character. He made it a rule not to assign any Jagir to any office, civil or military. Every payment was to be made by 'Varats' (Orders) or in cash from the treasury. None but the Karkuns had authority over the lands. All payments to the army, the Militia, and the garrison were to be made by the Karkuns.(15). These wise regulations had their desired effect, and arrested for the time being the growth of feudalism in Maharashtra.

Shivaji's kingdom, from a small Jagir, expanded into a big state concerning almost half of Maharashtra. The administrative and military systems of state grew and changed over a century. It was susceptible of time, place and personalities and bore the marks of the history of the Marathas.

From Sambhaji's capture in 1689 to the home coming of Shahu in May 1707, during this period, the machinery of government as devised by Shivaji broke down. A number of Maratha captains raised forces as their own, led expeditions in Mughal territory and made collection of revenues from which they reimbursed themselves. Shahu lacked the commanding talents and energy of his grandfather. To save the kingship being submerged and the country being involved in civil war and turmoil, Shahu accepted the chiefs as vassals with practically free reins in their territory to acknowledge them as hereditary

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14. Ibid., p.40.

15. Sabhasad, p.30; Sen, S.N.Sivacharitrapati, pp.33-34.

Jagirdars who would bring their forces to the common standard when called upon to do so, but who otherwise would have a free hand in the management of their jagirs. A revolution in feudalizing the Maratha state began.

Shahu's stay at home policy accelerated the process of feudalization and the want of capacity in his successors completed it. The chief who raised men and money for realizing the claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi in distant lands on their own could not be expected to be subservient to royal commands and render minute accounts to court officers, when the sovereign himself gave no directive and showed little interest in distant operations. Beside this Shahu directed his successors to maintain the Peshwa in power. The Raja having thus resigned royal authority, it was assumed by the Peshwa, which was resented by some chiefs like the Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhonsle and Gaikwad.

The successor of Raja Shahu, Ram Raja, who was brought up in humble circumstances, could not muster force strong enough to oppose the Peshwa and gave his written sanction that the Peshwa's authority should be obeyed.(16)

The rise of the Peshwa during Shahu's time affected Maratha history in two ways. It destroyed the solidarity of the constitution which Shivaji's Ashta Pradhan Council was expected to maintain, and it created two distinct classes of Sardars in the Maratha empire. Their ambition led them to establish an autocratic government and set the example of independence which henceforth

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16. Dhakta Ramrajachi Bakhar and Itihas Sangraha Peshwa Daftarantil Mahiti, pp.321-351.

became the only ambition of old Sardars like the Angrias, the Bhonsles and the Gaikwads to imitate. The result was that the Maratha empire ultimately became like a loose confederacy of ambitious feudal chiefs, and the Peshwa, like the Emperor, gradually descended to the position of the head of a confederacy of ambitious feudal chiefs, whose command was met with scant respect, and whose authority was confined within the territories under his direct personal rule. The old nobility regarded the Peshwa as their equal. They obeyed him only as the deputy of the King, while the new nobility, the Sindhia and the Holkar were the Peshwa's servants. They regarded the Peshwa as the master whose bread they ate and whom they were bound to serve. If the Bhonsle of Nagpur and the Sindhia of Gwalior were both present in the battle field, the Bhonsle would demand the chief command as a matter of right.(17)

The organisation of the Maratha state was thus very peculiar and without a precedent. The weakness of the Maratha power lay in the fact that it was not one unified power. It became an aggregate of powers with conflicting aims, policies and interests. They even conspired and fought against one another, and the Peshwa was unable to centralise the power of the Maratha state into one hand and thus direct all affairs according to common policy and a common plan. Thus the Marathas lacked a common will and policy, one unified control and direction in military affairs and political administration Hence a centrally directed and controlled Maratha State could not be build up.

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17. Sen, S.N., op.cit., pp. 204-206; Parasnis-Itihas Sangraha, VII; Aitihasik Sphuta Lekha, pp.4-5; Shahu Charitra, pp.134-135.

Administration of the Provinces:

Subedars were appointed in different provinces. Ragho Ballal Bhogate, Kamavisdar of Ramtek, gave a detailed account to Vaidya brothers of the administration of Raghuji Bhonsle at Chandrapur. "Krishnaji Narain and Bimbaji Vanjal were made the Subedars of Chanda and Devgarh respectively. Janoji was sent to Bengal, Mudhoji, Burhanshah Raje, Ranoji Naik, Jamibhai were also sent there. Raghunath Bhatt Patwardhan and Srirao Yelabhya Narmalkar were brought to Chanda probably for some money. Raghuji was unsympathetic towards Konkanasthast. But he showed confidence in Vaidyas, Torsuverao and Bimbaji Vanjal.(18) Shivabhat Sathe was appointed by Raghuji to manage his district of Makdai (near Khandwa); later on he was appointed the Subedar of Katak by Janoji Bhonsle. Raghuji gave the Kamavisi of the Makadai district to him for five thousand rupees.(19)

Shivaji had done away with the agency of such old hereditary officers as the Patil and Kulkarni in the village and the Deshmukh and the Deshpande in the district. They were left in the enjoyment of their old dues, but the work of revenue collection was entrusted to new officers directly appointed by the King. The work

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18. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.5; S.P.D.XX, 38, and 41.

19. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No. 38.

of district and provincial officers was supervised by the Prant Amatya and the Prant Sachiv, Ranade tells us that "The district account had to be sent to these officers and there they were collected together, and irregularities detected and punished. These officers had power to depute men on their establishments to supervise the working of the district officers.(20)

In Berar, as all over India, the aboriginal unit of landed division was the village.(21) But the lowest administrative denomination on the imperial registers had, since the Mohammedan conquest, been the Pargana or Mahal. Perhaps the Pargana is the more ancient revenue term of the two (it has been traced to the 13th century - Elliot's Glossary), while the Mahal might have come into Berar with the Mughals. Akbar grouped the parganas into Sarkars, of which thirteen formed the Berar Subah in his reign. But the Maratha occupation in practice broke them up, and introduced a different territorial system. But the Maratha departments disappeared with the Bhonsles and since their expulsion the province had been chiefly governed by distribution among talukdars.

The whole country was divided into Parganas, each consisting of a number of villages, varying greatly in size and income, under the Government of the Gonds, whom the Bhonsles supplanted. The Deshpandes and Deshmukhs were charged with administration of revenue. But the Maratha rulers removed them and entrusted the work to the

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20.Ranade, M.G., Rise of the Maratha Power, p.125.

21.Duff. Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.28.

Kamavisdar who was the highest official in a Pargana. For his assistance were appointed the Farhvis, the keeper of government accounts and the Vararpande, the keeper of village accounts. The chief officer in a village was the Patel, who was assisted by the Kotwar and the Pande or accountant as also Bara Baluti (village officer) or Ayakari, so common in most parts of the Deccan.(22)

The Patel was the agent of government for apportioning and collecting the rent of the village under his charge. He was also vested with some subordinate judicial and magesterial authority. The Patel's remuneration for his work was technically one-fourth of the share of government, but actually it came to one-sixth, being subject to various deductions proportionate to the parts of the many divisions into which the assessment was classified in revenue papers. The office of the Patel was held at the pleasure of the government and could neither be inherited nor sold.(23) "In the greatest part of Gondwana (Devgarh), the Raja is considered to be the hereditary Patel of all the villages, and the inferior Patelgis (village headship) consequently are not strictly hereditary".(24) Though they held office during the government's pleasure "the Patels, however, are not arbitrarily removed as long as they perform their engagements".(25) The cultivators held their land on a yearly lease granted to them by the

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22. Sinha, R.M., Bhonsles of Nagpur, The Last Phase,p.59.
23. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.85.
24. Ibid., ofs 1816.
25. Ibid.

Patel. The assessment was subject to variations and every field or piece of land had to pay the full proportion of the whole Jama of the village.

The system obtaining in the village was just like the one in the whole of the Maratha country, but there were local discrepancies which are worth noting. It was based upon the tacit assumption that village officers, such as Khatis (black smiths), should not turn stamp or any other kind of vendors, or Simpis (tailors) leave their ordinary duties undone to deal in cotton; nor did it contemplate village Mhars vying with Kumbis in the cultivation of the soil, still less their becoming land holders in other villages(26). In fact the works were fixed according to their professions.

Though the Balute, (a share in the corn and garden produced of a village, given to its officers) and Alute system was the only one in the Amraoti district, the terms themselves were known; a villager, however, would never confound a Balutedar or an Alutedar with a simple asami. First came the Patel and then the Patwari; after them the Balutedars - viz. Garpagari(hailavertor),

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26. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.28-29; Lyall, A.C.,op.cit., p.205.

Mhar, Chambhar (currier), Kumbhar (potter), Mahali (barber), Warshi (washerman), Gura Gurow (man who cleaned the temple), Josi or Joshi (astrologer); Bhat (bard) and Moola. It is singular, as, Grant Duff remarks, "that the Moola should be found on the Baluta establishment of a Hindu village, but that he is so here is undesirable".(27) Sonar, Jangamar Jaggan (hingayat Guru), Many (classified by Duff among the Balutedars, though he was considered as Alutedar), Simpi (tailor), Teli, Koli (water carrier), Gosain, Kurki (piper and smoke charmers), Bari, (pan-seller) and Condali (drum beater)(28), all these were Alutedars. The rest of the village inhabitants, e.g. cultivators and traders were called Asamis. Villages were termed either Gaon, Khera, Mauza, Kasba or Peth. Gaon was the general name. Khera was a term used for small villages. Mauza used often officially for Kasba a village having a bazar.

In Berar, the little Rajas (Gond, Kaku and Bhil) who even then claimed large tracts of the Gawilgarh hills, had from time immemorial held lands and levied dues on condition of moderate plundering, of keeping open the passes, and of maintaining hill posts constantly on the look out towards the plain. All along the Ajanta hills on the other side of the Berar valley was a tribe of Kolis who under the Naiks had charge of the ghats or gates of the ridge, and acted as a kind of local militia, paid by assignments of land in the villages. There were also families of Banjaras and the Marathas to whom the former governors of this country granted

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27. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.29.

28. Ibid., p.30; Lyall, A.C., op.cit., pp.205-206.

license to exact tolls from travellers and tribute from villagers, by way of regulating an evil which they were too weak or too careless to put down.

The Naikwasis seemed to have been men retained on the revenue establishment of the district for general service in the collection of the land tax and the work of administration. They were paid (as we find in old sanads) very commonly by getting grants of land, or they were pensioned off on a bit of arable waste. Of course the land revenue became hereditary.(29)

The estates in Berar were always granted rent free; and when cultivated lands were made, it may be assumed that the Sanads only conveyed the revenue on the area mentioned, as when a whole village was assigned. But in many cases small plots of waste lands were bestowed for petty services and hence it is clear that possession of the land itself was conferred upon the individuals. There were perhaps the oldest tenures by which specific properties in land were held in Berar.(30)

The Jagir in Berar seemed to have been originally always like the earliest feuds, a mere assignment of revenue for military service and the maintenance of order by control of certain districts. In later times the grant was occasionally made to civil officers for the maintenance of due state and dignity. The Jagir was even determined at the pleasure of the sovereign, or it was

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29. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.103.

30. Ibid., p.100.

transferred, on failure of service, to another person who undertook to carryout the conditions. But some of these grants when given to powerful families acquired a hereditary character. The Basim Deshmukh had held a village on this tenure for about one hundred and fifty years. The assignments were withdrawn when the service ceased; and they were considered a far inferior kind of property that of hereditary office. For instance the Sidkher Deshmukh, whose family held jagirs in the sixteenth century, possessed in the nineteenth century only the lands and dues attached to offices. The family had given up its jagirs, yet had seized every sort of Watan on which it could lay hands.(31) Probably the double government of the Maratha and the Nizam kept this tenure weak and precarious. The Nizam would have insisted on service from his Jagirdars during his incessant wars. The Maratha treated the Mughal Jagirdars very roughly, taking from them sixty percent of all the revenue assigned, wherever, such demand could be enforced. To plunder an enemy's jagir was much the same as to sack his military chest - it disordered the army estimates. Villages were under assignment to Jagirdars for the maintenance of troops, and these were given up by their holders. The system of Tonkba Jagir or assignment for army payments, by which whole parganas in Berar had been formerly held prevailed at that time. The irregularities of the old practice were motorious. A few followers for enabling the jagirdar to collect the revenue were sometimes the only armed forces really maintained; no musters were held and when troops were

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31. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., pp. 100-101.

seriously called out, the Jagirdar made hasty levies, or occasionally absconded altogether(32).

Several personal jagirs were conferred without any condition in Berar, which had been confirmed to the holders as a heritable possession. But none of these were made hereditary by original grant, save only the estates given to pious or venerable persons. Other jagirs had been obtained by court interest, acquired by local officers during their tenure of power, or allotted to them for maintenance of due state and dignity and such holdings were often continued afterwards as a sort of pension which slided into inheritance. Almost every jagir title was given by the Delhi Emperor or the Nizam, one or two by the Peshwa, but not one full grant derived from the Bhonsle dynasty, which never arrogated to itself that sovereign prerogative(33).

Section II

Various Institutions

Revenue System:

The system of Maratha revenue collection was simple enough. It exacted a proportion of the net receipts from all cultivation including Jagir and estates. There were the general heads, under which the revenue was collected under the government of the Bhonsles of Nagpur as follows:-

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32. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., pp.101-102.

33. Ibid.

(a) Land Revenue (Kalali)

(b) Sewai and Pandhri (Sair)

(c) City customs.

Except for the city customs and wharis (a tax due to the Zamindars), the rest were incharge of the Kamavisdars, "who were at once officers of revenue, justice and police"(34).

The actual principle on which the revenue was raised or lowered appeared to have resulted from a sort for compromise between the character of the season and the necessities of the Central Government. Curiously enough a sort of permanent revenue demand seems to have been recognised, called the Ain Jamabandi. This seems to have been the demand which the Marathas found existing at the time they took over the country from the Gond. In Nimar the Mughal revenue, known as the Ain Malkali, remained the basis of the Maratha demand. It could, however, be modified at the annual settlements with the Patel according to the increase or decrease of cultivation. Their method of raising of the assessment was to super-impose cesses known as 'Patli' or 'Bargans' which were per-

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34. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.84.

centages calculated on the Ain Jamabandi. The amount of the Pattis imposed by Raghuji was expressed as percentages on the Ain Jamabandi(35). The cultivated lands of each village were divided into fields, and a record thereof was maintained by the Registrar or Pande. The settlement was made annually at the commencement of each Agricultural year, between the Rayat and the Patel acting on behalf of the government. As, at the time of concluding the settlement; i.e. Istimalat, the total village assessment was not known, it was not possible, to determine the rent of each holding.

The annual demand of the government on a village was based on, but not determined by, the preceding year's assessment. Only the cultivated lands, and no other, were assessed. The demand was made on the village as a whole, and not on particular portions of it. The variations, subsequently made, were not guided by any fixed rules, but depended upon the relative capacity of the village, in the light of former experience. The assessment of the pargana was, in like manner, based on earlier settlements but modified to a certain extent by the character and circumstances of the existing government(36).

The assessment of a pargana could be raised by super

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35. Russell, A.V., op.cit., p.227.

36. Sinha, H.M., op.cit., p.62.

inducing Pattis; or Bargans which were extra percentages on a certain portion of the whole assessment what it originally was, is difficult to say. Under the Gond rulers, it was probably the whole Jama at the time of putting the first Patti, while the Marathas applied words, "on certain portion of the whole assessment" to the whole land revenue at the time of their taking possession of the country. Pattis were sometimes imposed on the entire territory, or other times on parganas only; occasionally they were put on for one or two years and then removed, but ordinarily they became part of the permanent assessment. Even when it was so, the amount collected on each separate Patti continued to be inserted in the revenue papers (Lagans). Under a distinct head which added considerably to its length and complexity. Thus it is difficult to form an accurate estimate of the actual increase of the Jama from a knowledge of different Pattis that were imposed from time to time. But for the sake of information the Pattis imposed by different rules may be mentioned. The Pattis super added by Raghuji from 1743 to 1755 amounted to eighty percent, of the Ain Jamabandi, those of Janoji from 1755 to 1772, to ninety six percent, those of Sabaji between 1772 to 1775 to thirty two percent, of Mudhoji during a period of thirteen years, to thirty/five percent, and Raghuji II, outdoing all his predecessors imposed between 1792 and 1816, Pattis amounting to hundred and thirty percent.(37.)

The Mohammedan conqueror never distributed the land of the Deccan into feuds; they dealt directly with the cultivators and

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37. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.89; Russel, R.V., Central Provinces District Gazetteers, p.227.

realised from them a heavy land tax. Successive governments seem to have been always, in Berar, strong enough to prevent the interception of this land tax by middleman. During the Maratha rule, the Patels and Deshmukhs, who were employed to manage the collections in villages and parganas, never got beyond hereditary office, nor made themselves the proprietors of the land. The village communities with their staff of servants and their hereditary Patel, cultivating the lands which from time immemorial had belonged to each township, upon no other tenure than that which usually permitted a man to keep possession of his fields so long as he paid to government the customary rent. But it had varied in many particulars according to social changes and the state of the country at different periods.(38)

Under the Marathas and the Nizam the mass of cultivators held their fields on a yearly lease, which was made out for them by the Patel at the beginning of each season; the land was acknowledged to belong to the state and as a general rule no absolute right to hold any particular field, except by yearly permission of the officials, was urged or allowed. A man could not always give up or transfer his holding without official authorization. From the time when Berar fell under two masters - the Nizam and the Marathas - the Berar people were gradually broken down. Where the Marathas had established themselves solidly and incontestably, they CONSIDERED ~~considered~~ the interests of their revenue in their treatment of the rent payers but upon the debatable lands in question they had no

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38. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, p.90.

reason to be considerate. Two necessitous governments rendered hungry and unsparing by long wars, competed with each other for the land tax.(39) Major Johnston, reporting on South Berar in 1854 writes - "Under the Hindu Government and upto the year 1818 Watandwar and Mundkheri it would appear had the right to dispose of their lands by gift of sole, or by transfer.(40) Mr. Bushby's (a resident of Hyderabad 1853-56) conclusions as to the tenure of land which originally prevailed in this province are given thus:- "A system similar to what obtained in the North-West provinces appears to have been maintained in all its integrity until the decline of the Delhi power, and indeed in many places until the district now included in North Berar was taken from the Nagpur Raja and made over to the Nizam. In the smaller villages, owing to the extinction of other branches of the family, there is often only one proprietor; in other, and particularly in Kasba towns or large villages the land has been much subdivided. There the divisions of Dimats were found, which would appear to correspond with the Thoks of the North-West, and these again were subdivided into Khels or Pattis. In some villages the whole land was common to the different Khels, and no doubt in former days all the proprietors shared it, the members of each Khel sharing the profits of it which of late years amounted to little more than the lakhs (customary dues). These headmen of each Khel or Dimat agreed with the Maratha officer

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39. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.91.

40. Ibid., p.93.

for the rents to be paid upon the lands claimed by each Khel".(41)

The exact sense in which Bushby uses the words "village proprietor" is not always clear; he may mean only the proprietor of land within the village. These headmen enjoyed two kinds of rights which were not at all connected with each other. They held land and possessed also the hereditary rights; as Patels to collect the rents and deduct their own customary dues. The two kinds of rightswere, however, in no way connected, nor did one arise from the other; there is abundant proof that men owned the land they cultivated, ~~but no proof that men owned the land they cultivated~~ but no proof, whatsoever, is available of superior ownership on land cultivated by others. The Berar cultivator suffered from all the evils of rack-renting, personal insecurity, and uncertain ownership of land, to a safe property and a fixed assessment.

The batai sub-tenure (metairie) was very common in Berar. These were the ordinary terms of the batai contract - the registered occupant of the land paid the assessment on it, but made it over entirely to the metayer, and received as rent half of the crop after it had been cleared and made ready for market. The proportion of 50:50 was invariable, but the metayer sometimes deducted his

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41. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.94. The report gives in detail the history of a village in which the Maratha rulers had for many years fixed the assessments of each internal division of the lands with the several branches of the original family that had settled in this township. Russell, R.V., op.cit., pp.224-225.

seed before dividing the grain. He (the sub-tenant) met all cultivating expenses.(42)

While in Berar the tenure of land, except by special grants, was always very loose; the tenure of revenue office, with all the rights, perquisites, and immunities which conveyed shares in the products, had from the earliest times been strong and steadfast. The Patel had always been the agent between the State and the village tenants for cultivation and collections; he was paid by rent free land, money dues and dignities; the whole being grouped under the term "watan." The office was a most precious family possession, heritable unless the government violently changed the course of succession or ousted a holder. It was transferable at need. The land was the patrimony of the family, which shared all profits and privileges according to the law of succession. The family was most tenacious of the dignities and small emoluments which pertained to the Patelgi, of the manpan or precedence in various ceremonies, and the possession of a site within the old village gari, or fortified enclosure. The title of Patel was preserved, and pedigrees were tested in marriage negotiations. But the actual appointment to the position duties of a Patel lay with the Revenue Administration, and the heir succeeded on a vacancy caused by death unless he was quite unfit. The number of Patels who claimed the title and dignities was not limited; that depended

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42. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.95.

on the number of branches thrown out from the original stock for all inherit. But the number of officers under the state depended on the size and needs of the township.(43)

The Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were the superior officers of pargana or revenue subdivisions. They might have been instituted by the earliest Mohammedan government to conciliate a conquered people and to assist in managing the revenue. They rose to great local importance under these dynasties. All of them held, by virtue of office, the right to take certain dues from the revenue collected in their sub-divisions, but some of the more powerful families received large grants of land in Jagir and patents for the collection of additional subsidies, on condition of military or police service, and the maintenance of order. The Deshmukhs of Sindkher and Basim were local magnates of this kind, they collected subsidies and perquisities from whole district, and absorbed the lower hereditary offices in many villages. Towards the decline of the Mughal power in Berar, they sometimes obtained their sub-divisions in farm; the title of Zamindar was commonly applied to them, and some of them were probably fast acquiring the status of Talukdars and Zamindars of Upper India.

In Berar, the Nizam and the Marathas were struggling for the revenue; they were too powerful to let any subject stand between them and the full demand; while wherever the Marathas got complete mastery, those keen financiers dispensed altogether with the services, and therefore, with the claims, of untrustworthy and

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43. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.99

influential collectors not directly subordinate to themselves, "the village and pargana officers had frequently, besides their money dues, large qualities of inam land and that the most boundless imposition have been thus committed on the State and the most extravagant pretensions advanced by Patels and Deshmukhs who had got into possessions of land of which they professed themselves proprietors of whole villages sometimes."(44)

Only a limited area of King Shahu's vast kingdom was administered from Nagpur. In Berar the Nagpur Raja claimed no more than the right to collect a certain share of the revenue. Administration was in the hands of the Nizam.(45)

After Aurangzeb's death the Marathas consolidated their predominance, and Chauth and Sardeshmukhi were formally granted by the Sayyad Minister of Farookhsiyar in 1717 upon the six and a half subahs of the Deccan. But in 1720, the Viceroy of the Deccan, under the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk, won his victories. He had been joined by the Subedar of Berar. After the battle of Shakarkhelda in 1724, Berar had always been nominally subject to the Hyderabad dynasty.

The Bhonsles posted their officers all over the province, they occupied it with their troops, they collected more than half the revenue, and they fought among themselves for possession of the

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44. Resident's Report for 1853-54, paras. 43 and 60.

45. Wills, C.U., op.cit., p.16; Wellington's Despatches, vol.II, p.605.

right to collect, but with the exception of a few parganas ceded to the Peshwa, the Nizam through all his misfortunes had constantly maintained his title as definedsovereign of this country, and it was always admitted by the Marathas. Raghuji got a regular commission to collect revenue from Berar and Gondwana in 1737. When he settled down at Nagpur, he annexed Wun pargana, Devgarh and Chanda and secured the possession of Gawilgarh fort in 1751, and he laid under contribution the whole country down to the Godavari. Hitherto the southern districts of Berar had only paid the regular tribute stipulated in A.D. 1741. But in 1755, when all the territory west of Berar was ceded to the Peshwa, Raghuji evacuated the tracts on the Godavari, and retired behind the Painganga.(46)

In all political papers of the period, in the treaties and in some histories, the Bhonsle chiefs were termed the Raja of Berar - a title by which Raghuji was never known in Berar itself. The Bhonsle family also never pretended to anything like sovereignty in Berar. "They quartered themselves on the country as military commanders, with authority (which soon became hereditary) to levy the Maratha dues, and to realize large assignments for support of their troops. But even in the exercise of their power they were nominally subject to the Peshwa, while the Nizam's share in the revenue was always formally admitted. Of course the Maratha exactions were measured by their power, they took just as much as they could get, nevertheless they pretended to keep regular accounts

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46. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.122.

with the Nizam's officers, who were never openly ejected from their posts as from a conquered country, though they were often entirely set aside for a time.(47)

The districts were called 'Do Amli',(48) that is under Duel Administration and in all the revenue papers the collections were divided, the Maratha share being usually sixty percent. Even the south-eastern tracts, wrested by Raghuji from the Gond Chief of Chanda, were held by the Marathas as Do Amli. But while the Nizam constantly made grants of rent free land for endowments and maintenance in Berar, and while the Peshwa or his officers provided for numberless Brahmans out of the tracts in Berar, ceded to him in 1760 and 1795, it may be almost positively affirmed that the Bhonsle never attempted to make any such gifts of land, made over his share of the revenue of a given estate, and often gave even charitable allowances charged against receipts. And even these agents were never guaranteed by treaty, as was done for the Peshwa's assignments on the districts restored in 1822 to the Nizam.(49)

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47. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., pp. 125-126.

48. According to Wills, "the term Do-amli as "jointly administered" is misleading. The Marathas had no concern with the administration of Berar but only with the collection of its revenues. The government has in fact, been in the hands of the Nizam and his officers are already in all the principal places in the country. The Rajah of Nagpur had the largest share of the revenue; but he collected the money by sending his karkuns (clerks) into the different districts, at the time the revenues were paid, or by having them constantly sending in the districts at the same time that the Nizam's officers were carrying on the business of the government". (Wills,C.U., op.cit.,p.16).

49. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., p.126.

The Bhonsle chiefs had the title of Sena Sahib Subah (Commander of the forces); they had been dubbed Rajas, but they were never Rajas of the land. The Marathas were equally unrecognised intruders within Berar.(50) They exacted a proportion of the net receipts from all cultivation including Jagir and estates, and they usually took fifty percent of the money paid direct to the Nizam's treasury, with sixty percent on a Jagir assignment. Though in some of the richest districts sixty percent was taken upon all lands without distinction of this percentage, ten percent was called Sardeshmukhi and the rest Mokasa.(51) But the items which came under this heading are not to be clearly traced in the Maratha records of this province. A note in para 160 of the Resident's Report for 1853-54, explains that sixty percent was thus made up: Chauth twenty five percent; Sardeshmukhi ten percent; Faujdar's allowance for district administration twenty five percent. Thus, whenever, the Marathas entirely elbowed out, the Nizam's officers had administered the country, they pocketed the allowance.

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50. The Bhonsle Chief's highest title (Sena Sahib) was official; and even if he had obtained undisturbed possession of Berar, he would have put out of sight the badge of dependence, but he would never have styled himself Raja of Berar. The title 'Raja of Berar' bears in its style evidence of being an European misnomer. The history of India does not illustrate any such conception being entertained as that of territorial sovereignty. So also the Maratha conquerors never assumed territorial designation.

51. Mokasa seems in Berar to have been the technical term which included in a lump sum all the Maratha dues except the ten percent above mentioned. The Mokasa was thus made up: Chauth twenty five percent, Faujdar's allowance for district administration twenty five percent.

This period has been described as one of bare faced plunder and fleecing without principle or stability. Whenever, the Nizam appointed a collector, the Marathas appointed another, and both claimed the revenue and each side exacted forced contribution, so that the harassed cultivator often left his land and helped to plunder his neighbours(52).

Besides the land revenue, the Marathas realised a large number of imports and dues on all branches of trade and industry(53). Records of that time mention no less than fifty taxes, cesses and Abwabs (extra duties). But some of these taxes were levied probably once in a life time, others were collected on special occasions, while some of them were undoubtedly confined to a particular locality(54). Sabaji Bhonsle wrote to Naro Anant Gadre, agent of

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52. Amraoti District Gazetteer, pp.294-295.

53. Russell, R.V., op.cit., p.227.

54. Rajwade's Marathyanchya Itihasanchi Sadhanen; Mawaji & Parasnis's Sanads and Letters and the transactions of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal of Poona.

Vishwanath Bhat, at Bhugaon, to levy Mejamari Patti on the villagers living in the town, like the previous year. This was a tax for the expenses of the army - also called Rasad or Najarana.(55) Alike in whole of the Maratha kingdom, Raghuji also levied different kind of taxes and cesses in his sphere. As the Nalbandi tax (the money given for the preparation of war), was imposed upon certain people.(56) Vishwanath Bhat was granted the Mokasa of Charthana for covering the expenses of Palanquin and also other haks. The village officers Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were informed about this special favour shown to the Vaidyas.(57) Sadashiv Hari was ordered by Konherram to pay rupees three thousand for Makodai(58) Raghuji took Nagarpatti from the village of Bhugaon. The state had also levied Najarana.(59) Subedars of Devgarh and Chanda were asked to pay rupees twenty thousand each as Darbar expenses.(60) Tekdai Amal was also the source of revenue.(61) There was an another kind of revenue called Potdari, such as Raghuji had given to Vaidya brothers the Potdari share of revenue of the villages. It was usually two percent of the revenue, but sometimes it was reduced by Raghuji to one percent.(62) Potdari was recovered with difficulty. Raghuji asked Tulajo Ram to remit the dues of the Potdari of Prant Devgarh.(63) There was a tax called Kharchapatti, which Janoji Bhonsle recovered under great pressure.(64) Marriage tax was also imposed in Raghuji's time. Vishwanath Bhat wrote to Jamibhai about what had been done by Raghuji and himself for the

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55. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.10, 24.2.1749.
56. Ibid., Vol.II, Nos. 2 & 3, 16.10.1734.
57. Ibid., Vol. III, Nos. 69 & 70.
58. Ibid., Vol.IV, No.30, November, 1742.
59. Ibid., No.7, 1.2.1745.
60. Ibid. , No.10, 12.2.1745 and No. 34. 24.8.1746.
61. Ibid., No.11, 8.3.1747.
62. Ibid. No.22, April 1749, This letter contains the names of the villages in Devgarh district from which the Potdari cess was

recovery of Potdari and Marriage tax. Raghuji had sent Govind Keshav for doing the work at Peth Nagpur and Balaji Rao and Sadashiv Gopal in Prant Chhatisgarh. Jamibhai was asked to help these men.(65)

Ransom was another source of income of Raghuji, which he used to demand for the release of his enemies; this helped him to clear off his debts, by which he was always burdened. For instance in the case of Chanda Saheb, he demanded heavy ransom, which was paid in instalments.(66)

The Marathas variously classified their land according to fertility, the nature of the crops, and the method of irrigation. (67) The revenue policy of the Peshwas was based on the principle of recurring the prosperity of the tax-payer. Even the Jagirdars or Feudal Barons, who exercised sovereign authority within their fiefs were not always indifferent to the welfare of their subjects.(68) The Patil was responsible for revenue collection.(69)

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recovered by the Vaidyas. The table gives the details of the revenue collected with the name of the Vaidyas' clerks who were appointed for the recovery and also the balances to be recorded.

63. S.P.D., XXIII, 60.
64. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV. No.36, September, 1749.
65. Ibid. Vol.V, No.6, May 1754.
66. Ibid., Vol.II, No.27; Vol.III, No.68; Vol.IV, No.31, 8.11.1743. No.7, 13.4.1744; No.20, 11.7.1744 and Nos. 42 and 43,6.9.1744.
67. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.609.
68. Ibid., op.cit. p.273.
69. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol. I, p.34.

Captain William Gordon, who was deputed to the Poona Court in 1737, was favourably impressed with the revenue policy of the Peshwa. He wrote - "Bajirao has a great extent of country, to appearance more fertile and valuable than any other I had passed through. His territories are well peopled, and the poorer sort in the farming way, are rendered easy in their rents, which causes his extent of dominion to be in a very flourishing condition, more so than any other in the possession of the Marathas".(70) "Raghuji became proprietor of half the province and levied on the other half, under Mohammedan authority, a grevious tax of fifty percent, under the denomination of Sardeshmukhi, Chauth, Sautra, Bapty- all included in the general name of Mokasa. The term Mokasa originally was used to signify a village or land assigned to an individual either rent free or at a low-gint rent, in condition of service. Later on Mokasa included all types of taxes and cesses imposed by the Marathas under this name, viz. Sahotra or Sautra was an item of the Maratha Chauth, being the six percent of the balance of the collections after setting aside one fourth of the Peshwa. Bapti or Bapoti means patrimonial inheritance. Sardeshmukhi was a tax of ten percent exacted by the Maratha from the revenues of the Mohammedan territories of the Daccan, in addition to the Chauth or one fourth of the revenue, which also they claimed from the Mohammedan rulers of the Deccan".(71)

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70. Forrest, W.G.- Selections from State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, Maratha series, Vol.I, p.79.

71. Forrest; W.G., op.cit., p.728.

The amount of Raghuji's revenue cannot be given accurately. The countries in his dominion, or paying him tribute, may be generally described as extending east and west from the Bay of Bengal to the Ajanta Hills, and north and south, from Narbada to the Godavari.

The Patel was the most important official in the revenue department, he enjoyed many rights and privileges. Besides enjoying the status of representative of the government in a village he had various privileges, which he dearly prized. He cared much more for these privileges, and for the honour of the name, than for the mere money value. The privileges were of two kinds: The "man" and "pan". The "man" were the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Patel at the three festivals of the Pola, Dassera and Holi. The "pan" were rights of pan-supari and maryal made to the Patel on certain occasions, according to the means of the donors. The great mass of Patels were Kumbis, but there were several Mali Patels, whilst a few were Brahmans. Though the Watan had usually been conferred on Brahmans, yet in many instances it belonged to the Patel of the village. When Deshmukh held the Watan, it would be found that he was likewise the Patel. None but Brahmans and Patels held it. Where the holder was not a Brahman, he employed one as his gumashta. Like all Maratha villages, have also the Patel and the Patwari were at their head. They were the sole channels of communication between their villagers and the Sarkar(72)

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72. Lyall, A.C., op.cit., pp.206-207; Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol. I, pp.32-34.

Neither the Patel nor the ryots were allowed any hereditary rights which might clash with the efficiency of this system. "The Patel" wrote Sir H. Jenkins, "is the agent of government for apportioning and collecting the rent of his villages, for which his responsibility is absolute, and he possesses a subordinate and rather undefined magisterial and judicial authority.(73)

The remuneration for agency or responsibility, which was paid either in money or rent free land besides certain trifling dues and privileges was commonly one-fourth of the government share, subject to various deductions which reduced it to about one-sixth. The office was held at the pleasure of the government, being neither hereditary nor saleable, and on the ejection or resignation of the incumbent no Malikhana was allowed. It is true that the Patels were frequently succeeded by their sons or other members of their family, not, however, by virtue of any hereditary right, but by sufferance or a new appointment, by the government ; and whoever might be the Patel, he was charged with the full performance of all the duties and was entitled to all the privileges of the office unencumbered with any interference or claims on the part of his predecessor or family. "The ryots held their lands on yearly leases granted to them by the Patel. None of them were entitled to cultivate the same fields in perpetuity, nor was it the practice to grant leases to them for more

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73. Russell, R.V., op.cit., p.226.

than one year".(74) As in Shivaji's administration, no public office was hereditary here also.

Coinage:-

The rupees coined first by Chand Sultan weighted eighty six rattis, its composition being four rattis alloy, and eighty two pure silver. On his country being conquered by Raghuji, the name Ahmad Shah was impressed on the coins, and the quantity of alloy in each rupee was increased by one ratti, the weight of rupee remaining as before, i.e. eighty six rattis.(75) Jonoji decreased the weight of the rupee to eighty five rattis, and increased the quantity of alloy by one ratti more, so that it consisted of seventy nine rattis of pure silver and six rattis of alloy.

In the reign of Raghuji I the Sarafs were held responsible for the depreciation of copper coinage.(76) The price of the purest form of gold was never below rupees seventeen per tola, and during the last last two decades it never rose above rupees twenty. Copper varied from rupees sixteen to rupees twenty per maund. A tola of the best quality of silver sold at rupee one, annas five and pies four. The price of these metals was subject

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74. Russell, A.V., op.cit., p.226.
75. C.P.Civil Secretariat (Bundle correspondence), Question No.22.
76. Ibid., case file No.I of 1823, Finance Department.

to fluctuation. Silver was considered the standard of the value of other metals.(77). Bullion (silver) could be purchased in bulk from Bombay. At Nagpur ten or twelve thousand worth of bullion only could be readily purchased.(78)

Law and Justice:-

The system of administration of justice was simple and suited to the temper of the time. There was no codified law like the present day, and procedure was uncertain and informal. The administration of law and justice obtaining under the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur appears to have been perfunctory, indefinite and haphazard, when we compare it with the elaborate formalities of modern judicial organisation with its well defined hierarchy of courts, marked jurisdiction, and precise legal codes. The British administrators wrote that under the Bhonsle rulers, "there were no regularly constituted courts of Justice".(79) The only exception, according to them was a court in the city of Nagpur "for the trial of petty offences". Nevertheless, it is possible to present a coherent picture of the Bhonsle judicial system with all its imperfections, lack of definite and uniform principles and continuity of such rules and precedents as to inspire confidence in the decisions of judicial tribunals. But this judicial organisation, being native to soil and having been brought into exis-

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77. Mint Question, no.20.
78. Ibid.
79. Supplement to Jenkins Report, p.5.

tence for meeting the needs of a people who found it useful, continued to hold the field till it was replaced by the British system. The administration of justice was classified under two heads: (a) Civil, and (b) Criminal. In addition to the civil and criminal courts, there was a city court for trial of petty offences. The Raja, the Kamavisdar and the Patels administered justice in civil cases. There were no written laws or well defined customs to regulate the decisions of the judge, who decided cases according to his own discretion. In matters of succession and inheritance, the Hindu Sastras and Mohammedan laws governed the cases affecting the Hindus and the Musalmans respectively.

Following the practice at Poona, the system of Panchayat was prevalent in most of the Maratha States. Elphinstone, the British Resident at Poona, has rightly termed it, "as the great instrument in the administration of Justice".(80) Jenkins says that "the Panchayats were assembled to decide all kinds of civil cases." They were assembled in villages by the Patels and were open to all those who chose to attend them". There was no fixed place for them to meet, but the Chabootra or terrance of Mahadeo was generally selected, "as giving the sanctity of an oath to anything that might be transacted there."(81) Elphinstone gives a detailed account of the working of Panchayat in the dominions of the Peshwa and, since the administration of other Maratha

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80. Elphinstone's Report - edited by Forrest, p.337.

81. Supplement to Jenkin's Report, p.6.

States were modelled on the system prevalent at Poona,(82) it may be reasonably inferred that the working of this institution under the Nagpur Bhonsles was similar to that found at Poona. Speaking of the working of the Panchayats in the Nagpur kingdom, Jenkins says that, "the proceedings of the Panchayat were just heard and examined, (that of the defendant and his opponent). The witnesses and friends of both parties were allowed to be present during the investigation and they often interfered. Much confusion arose and the decision was frequently carried by acclamation(83) There was no written code to regulate the decisions of the Panchayat. They were guided by their views of justice which were, no doubt, in conformity with the principles of the law (Hindu and Mohammedan) governing the parties, and not repugnant to the well known customs of the country. They hardly consulted any books, and only in cases connected with the Hindu and Mohammedan law such as marriage or succession they referred to a Shastri or Maulvi for his opinion.(84) witnesses and members were free from influence and interference. The government officer, under whose authority the Panchayat was assembled, enforced its decisions.(85)

The working of the Panchayats was, no doubt, subject to

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82. Gune, V. T., "The Judicial system of the Marathas". Introduction, p.43.
83. Supplement to Jenkins Report, p.6.
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid, p.7.

many drawbacks. Regarding their condition under Raghuji I, when the Nagpur state was in the heyday of its power and influence, we have little information. But as Elphinstone says, "the model may be learned by observing the proceedings of the Nayayadhish at Poona during the long period when Ram Shastri was at the head of that Court and when Nana Fadnavis was minister and Regent".

Accofding to Major Agnew, "there were no courts for the administration of civil justice in the Maratha government and there is but too much reason to believe that in this branch of judicature there was a total failure of all substantial justice, and that where redress was sought beyond the village; Gaontiah interest or bribes were the general, if not the only means of obtaining it".(86) Like old customs among other forms, such as trial by ordeal, the Maratha judge allowed ordeal by fire and water, as well as appeal to divine intervention in the form of an oath taken in a sacred temple.(87) Shivaji retained his simple primitive method of administering justice. The village elders used to hear civil suits and administer common-sense justice. Chhatrapati Pratap Singh in the Nayayadhish Prakaran of his Yadi says, "The good old rule of this realm has been to make amicable settlement of all disputes through the proper exertionof neighbours and to call a Panchayat only when there is no other remedy.(88)

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86. Agnew's Report on Chhatisgarh, 1820.

87. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.347.

88. Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal - Tritiya Sammelan Vritta, pp.51-52.

The Peshwa and his minister, the Sar-Subhedar, the Mamlatdar, fiefs of different subahs, and the Patil in the village exercises all different judicial functions. The Nayayadhish was a judiciary pure and simple. The Peshwas went out on tour every year, or received complaints and punished the offenders.(89)

For hearing appeal cases a fresh Panchayat could be appointed, or the Peshwa's minister or the Mamlatdar (as the case might be) might decide the case without a Panchayat. Any Panchayat however, qualified, could not legally proceed to perform judicial duties unless properly authorised by the government.(90)

There was a well organised machinery for enforcing the laws of the land, and there was a body of professional men well versed in laws to help the judges in interpreting them. It was characterized by great simplicity. There was no codified law, no fixed procedure, and even a lengthy suit hardly cost the parties any thing but the unavoidable worries and anxieties.(91) Fines were charged according to the resources of the offender. Capital punishment in the days of Shahu Chhatrapati and Balaji Baji Rao seems to have been unknown. Murder and treason were punished with fine, confiscation of property and imprisonment.(92) There were no regular prisons; some rooms in forts were generally

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89. Sen, S.N., op.cit., pp.355-357.

90. S.P.D., II, p.238.

91. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.376.

92. Ibid., p.381.

used for that purposes.(93)

Jenkins Report, "The Raja in person, or the Kamavisdars, administered criminal justice. Patels of villages imposed small fines for the minor offences; but all of any consequence were referred to the officers of government."(94) The revenue office took cognizance of civil and criminal cases, while the Patil or the village headmen decided cases requiring minor magisterial powers. In important cases the appeal rested with the Sena Sahib Subah, who decided them in the open Darbar after consulting the proper authorities. But mainly the cases under the Bhonsle rule were decided by the Raja himself.

Elphinstone has passed strictures upon the judicial system of the Marathas. He says,"The Judicial system seems to have been very imperfect. There was no regular administration of justice, no certain means of filing a suit, and no fixed rule of proceeding after it had been filed. It rested with the officer of the government applied to receive a complaint or to neglect it altogether."(95) But perfection of course cannot be claimed for any institution in the world. Elphinstone found that the Maratha country was peculiarly free from crimes. The reason was that the rules were not naturally cruel. Fines were imposed in murder cases. The Subedar of Wai

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93. Ibid., p.417.
94. Supplement to Jenkins Report, p.7.
95. Elphinstone's Report- p.65.

reported a murder case to the Huzur. A sum of rupees three hundred and fifty as compensation for murder and a government fine of rupees two hundred, were ordered to be imposed upon and realised from the murderer. The amount of fine was to be remitted to the Huzur.(96) Efforts were made to trace out the culprit in any case of murder etc.(97)

Villages were attached for the repayment of debt, if the person concerned refused to pay the debt.(98) If a person died without an issue, his property was handed over to his relatives, instead of being taken over by the government.(99) Capital punishment was only inflicted under martial law in cases of treason and rebellion: it was not inflicted in cases of ordinary murder. Cow-killing was regarded as a henious crime. Brahmin offenders were treated lightly as compared with members of the lower caste. Civil suits were chiefly concerned with questions of adoption, division of property, maintenance of widows and similar topics.(100)

As far as possible the matters were settled amicably between the parties. "For the adjudication of a dispute relating to the Patilki Watan of Mawdi; Panch were called. They consisted of fifteen men of different castes and professions, and some men from other villages and the Deshmukh and the Deshpande. It appear-

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96. Vad and Parasnis - Selections from the Satara Raja's and the Peshwa's diaries, I, No.315, p.186.
97. Ibid., No.313, p.185.
98. Selections from the Satara Raja's and the Peshwa's Diaries I, No. 306, p.182.
99. Ibid., No.305, p.182.
100. S.P.D.XIII,

ed from the evidence of these men that the Watan originally belonged to the Bhonsle family, that the family absent from the village for seven generations and that during that period the Watan was enjoyed by the Jagtap family. The Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were there upon directed to settle the matter amicably between the parties. This was done and the Watan was divided equally between two families.(101) Sometimes in the dispute or case of succession, the advice of the whole council was sought and accordingly the case was decided.(102)

Nobody could have acquired the property of any villager forcefully. In such cases the fines were imposed and the person concerned was asked to restore the property. In one of such cases Senapati Yashwantrao Dabhade was punished.(103) The village officers were fined, if some persons of their village found guilty of digging the field secretly, for finding out the hidden treasure.(104)

The Police:

The organisation of the Police under the Bhonsles consisted of "a large establishment of harkaras, scattered over the country for obtaining information on all subjects."(105) The foun-

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101. Selections from the Satara Raja's and the Peshwa's Diaries I, No.296, p.157.
102. Selections from the Satara Raja's and Peshwa's Diarilies I, No.294, p.154.
103. Ibid., No.319, p.188; and No. 321, p.189.
104. Ibid., No.330, p.193.
105. Supplement to Jenkins, Report of 1827,p.8.

dation stone of the police system was the village watchman, or Kotwar. He was a person of considerable importance in the village community. The Patel worked under the direction and control of Kamavisdar who looked after the various branches of administration in pargana. In large villages there was generally an officer called Havaldar, who acted under the Patel in police matters and was paid by the government.

The Military system: The Maratha Empire was primarily a military organisation and its civil institutions were closely connected with its military system. Every State formed an organic unit. Lest the interest of the different chiefs should in any way clash and lead to hostilities, Shahu clearly defined their "Spheres of activity". Thus Khandesh and some part of Balaghat were reserved for the Peshwa; the Senapati received Bengal and Gujrat; to the Sena Sahib Subah was assigned Berar and Gondwana and all the territories to the east: the Sarlashkar was incharge of Gangthadi and the province of Aurangabad; while the districts between the Nira and the Warna were left to the Pratinidhi's care.(106) These chiefs were to collect chauth from the territories assigned to them; they could, if they liked, extend their activities further in their immediate neighbourhood. They were to make a stipulated contribution to the royal treasury, and to meet the expenses of some of the Karkhanas or royal establishments, within their fiefs, they were to exercise sovereign authority without any interference from the Raja. Thus peace at home and expansion abroad were at once provided for. As some check

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106. Madhav Rao Chitnis - Thorle Shahu Maharaja Yanche Charitra, edited by Sane - III edition, p.47.

on these feudal chiefs, who for all practical purposes became independent princes, their civil establishments were appointed from the headquarters. The King was henceforth not to trouble himself about financing military expeditions, or arrange for the payment of the army. The Sardeshmukhi and Baluti were expected to meet all his personal needs. Thus the feudalism of the army and of the state was complete.(107)

Each of the fiefs was given a Jagir, in return for which he was expected to maintain a stipulated force. This system did not work well, and led to conflict which it was expected to obviate. The Peshwa fought with the Senapati; the Dabhades could render no service to the state as genius was not hereditary, the Gaikwads and the Bhonsles were not very favourably disposed towards the Peshwa and the Peshwa found it necessary to trespass on their special reserves.(108)

The Peshwa's government did not advance the necessary funds and the Saranjam- holder had generally to raise it as best as he could. He was by the terms of his appointment bound to render an account of his civil stewardship as regularly as possible, and to give a muster of his force; but this was done at long intervals. Thus was created a vicious circle whereby military needs affected the efficiency of the civil administration and the inefficiency of the civil government reacted disastrously upon military efficiency.(109)

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107. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.47.
108. Ibid., p.49.
109. Ibid., p.54.

Once feudalism was re-established, the Maratha tradition concerning the sanctity of the Watan stood in the way of any effective military reform. More than once attempts were made to reduce these chiefs to submission, but it was found impracticable to crush these Sardars. In his conflict with these old Sardars or military chiefs the Peshwa relied on the support of his own adherents. These in their turn were rewarded with rich fiefs and became the founders of new families. But a military power based on suspicion and jealousy cannot last long, the policy recoiled against its originators when the feudal chiefs on their part exploited the dissension and disunion in the Peshwa's family.(110)

In practice, however, these Sardars failed to identify their interests with those of the State. They did not maintain the stipulated force. They did not always pay their men according to the scale laid down by the Peshwa,(111) and the number and quality of their horses were generally below the required standard.

It is true that Shahu had, in return for the grant of chauth, bound himself to maintain a body of fifteen thousand horse in the Emperor's service, to be placed at the disposal of the Subedars, Faujdars and officers in the different districts, "and to maintain peace and order."(112)

Shivaji had a distrust for feudal levies; his officers and

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110. Sen, S.N., op.cit., pp.55-57.
111. S.P.D.,IX, pp. 310-324.
112. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.115.

men were paid directly by him; and he carefully refrained from creating fresh fiefs. The Peshwas, on the other hand, used to rely mainly on feudal forces and divided the whole of the Maratha empire into a number of military jagirs. The feudal chiefs were more attentive to their own interest, and were absolutely incapable of taking a broad view of the imperial interest. This was the real cause of the civil wars that characterised the closing years of the Maratha Empire. If the feudal lords felt inclined sometimes to fight against the Peshwa, it is no wonder that they were frequently engaged against their neighbours and fellow-chiefs. This was detrimental to the solidarity and unity of the empire to which they all belonged and which they were supposed to serve. This was one of the defects of the Maratha military system.(113) Some of the defects of Maratha military system were due to the feudalism. The badly led, badly armed, and badly organised feudal army of the Maratha Empire had to relinquish the unequal contest after a brief struggle. The inefficiency of the command in the Maratha army can be directly traced to its feudal organisation, and inability of the Marathas to improve their military and civil institutions were also due to the same cause.(114)

The main strength of the Maratha army lay in the cavalry. A cavalry regiment was generally served by a number of attendants, and under Ranoji Bhonsle, it had no less than five Karkuns and one

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113. Sen, S.N., op.cit., pp.439-440.

114. Ibid., p.242.

hundred and eighty one attendants, though its fighting strength was seven hundred.(115) The Peshwa's government could afford but little protection against depredations of the feudal army. This was the weakest point in the Maratha government.

The territories under the Peshwa suffered from lack of security of life and property. This was the result of feudalism The Peshwas, instead of checking the growth of feudalism, considerably helped its progress and development. Instead of maintaining a strong army, independent of the feudal forces, the Peshwas became more and more dependent on the Sardars.(116)

In the Maratha army, a career was open to everyone of ability, and every soldier carried a Maratha's baton in his knapsack, and many a Sardar had risen from very low position.(117)

There was no national or territorial recruitment for Raghuji's army. This is one peculiarity about his army. It was almost entirely composed of foreign and immigrant mercenaries. The idea of national or territorial defence, such as Shivaji inspired in the Konkan, never appealed to the inhabitants of Raghuji's dominions. Shivaji enlisted in his army not only Hindus but Mohammedans also.(118) His civil and military institutions were not much affected by the communal feelings. His army was a national one.

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115. Sen, S.N., op.cit., pp.451-454.
116. Ibid., p.475.
117. Ibid., p. 456.
118. Ibid., p.144.

Raghuji had to depend almost entirely on soldiers recruited from outside the borders of his kingdom. As Jenkins says: "It may be observed that the armies of the state were never raised or recruited in Devgarh; nor is there any ancient military force of the country. The cavalry was composed of Marathas.from the Poona territories and from different parts of the Deccan, with Mohammedan adventurer's from Hindustan, i.e. North India and the Infantry consisted of Arabs, Gosain, Pardesis. It seems remarkable that to few of the military adventurers, who accompanied the first Raghuji from Berar and served in the armies of his successors, should have thought of forming permanent establishments in the district, and it is not possible that the absence of a race of native soldiers, which must have grown of a contrary system, has both contributed to the speedy and complete settlement of the country and saved the government from the expense of providing for a numerous class of individuals. These Maratha soldiers do not appear to have considered this country as their home, in general they looked to military employment as the sole means of obtaining livelihood and on the ruin of that service they either retired to their paternal abodes or engaged in the armies of other states, when opportunities of service in Nagpur began to diminish."(119) A few Maratha families were scattered around Nagpur district, the members of which were engaged in cultivation and also served as soldiers or sent Bargis to serve in their place. The Gonds though used to arms, did not possess the

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119. Jenkins Report on the Territories of the Rajah of Nagpur, pp.22-23.

qualities of good soldiers.(120)

Raghuji's army consisted of eighteen thousand horse and twenty five thousand infantry, of which eleven thousand were regular battalions, besides four thousand Arabs. His field artillery included about ninety pieces of ordnance. The military force was for the most part raised outside the limits of the State. The cavalry being recruited from Poona, while, besides the Arabs, the adventurers from Northern India and Rajputana were largely enlisted in the infanty.(121) According to Jenkins his army was principally composed of horse, His standing force was about 15,000 but liable to be augmented every year according to the exigencies of the moment.(122) The English Records say little or nothing of the forces of Raghuji the Great, during whose reign the military reputation of the Nagpur house was at its highest.(123)

Gangaram throws valuable light on the composition of the Maratha army. The whole Maratha army, which invaded Bengal under Bhaskar Pandit, was divided into several parts, each under a Jamadar. Bhaskar himself was the Sardar or Commander-in-Chief of the army. No definite information is given as regards the exact number of soldiers who were led by each of these Jamadars. Their position

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120. Sinha, R.M., op.cit., p.46.

121. Russell, R.V., Imperial Gazetteer of India- Central Provinces, p.18.

122. Jenkin's Report 1826, p.56. Kinciad and Parasnis, Vol.II, op.cit., say that Raghuji the Great led 50,000 men into the Carnatic in 1740.

123. Wills, C.U., British Relations with the Nagpur State in the 18th century, p.186.

in the army was considerable important , as some of them were often mentioned as leading thousands. On the whole, mention is made of twenty four Jamadars leading the Maratha army.(124) Further , Gangaram writes that there were one Sirdar (Commander-in-Chief), twenty four Jamadars and forty thousand troops in the Maratha army.(125) The army of the Bhonsles consisted of the foot soldiers, the cavalry, artillery and elephants. The details of the cavalry given by Forester, the first Resident of Nagpur (1788-1791) are as follows:-

Bargir (directly paid by the Bhonsles for the maintenance of the horse)-	2,000
Cavalry under the Siledars -	4,700
Cavalry of the Jagirdar of Sivani-	300
Cavalry in Katak Subha -	2,000
Cavalry in Gangthodi -	1,500
Total	10,500

Elephants - 200

Fifteen canon pieces manufactured in Nagpur under the command of a Portuguese and a French.(126)

The cavalry of the Bhonsles was known for its speed and

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124. Maharashtra Puran - translated by Tamarash Chandra, p.7.

125. Ibid., p.10.

126. Kale, Y.M., op.cit., p.289.

efficiency. The cavalry of Berar since the period of the first Raghuji were classed among the choist troops of the Deccan.(127) After the death of Raghuji I, the army of the Bhonsles became heterogeneous in an increasing proportion. Raghuji's standing force was about five thousand, but liable to be augumented every year according to the exigencies of the times.

Trade and Commerce: According to Grant Duff, "Trade, in the Maharatta country, as far as authentic record exists, has always been a secondary object with the government.(128) The material and even moral injury caused to this province (BERAR) by the wars of the 18th century might have been wide and deep. The Subah is described in the Ain-i-Akbari as highly cultivated, and in parts populous. It paid a great revenue to the Deccan kings which had been increased under the Mughals. In 1667, M. de Thevenot travelled through Khandesh and Berar. He says that all the country round Burhanpur was rich and well peopled. He guesses that there were few such wealthy parts of the empire as Khandesh and Berar. He talks of "Balaghat" as one of the finest provinces of the Mughals; and he was evidently impressed by the flourishing condition of the country. Burhanpur was then the chief commercial city of these parts with thriving manufacturers, a great cotton trade, much commerce with all India, and with the foreign merchants. In like manner, the record of the travels of Tavernier's through the Deccan give the idea of a prosperous people not ill governed. But a few years later

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127. Forster's Despatch of September the 13th, 1790.

128. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.35.

came evil times. The profitable export trade of cloth from Burhanpur was hindered; the raw produce of Berar was shut out from the markets; cultivation fell off first when the finances were strained by the long wars; the local revenue officers rebelled; the army became mutinous; and the Marathas easily plundered a weak province, when they had diminished its sinews by cutting off its trade. The Maratha by these means succeeded in fixing his hold on this province; but its resources were dilapidated; its people might have been seriously demoralized by a regime of bare faced plunder and fleecing, without attempt at principle or stability. Unluckily for Berar, too, not one of the Bhonsles, except perhaps the first Raghuji had any of that real ability or strong character which distinguished Baji Rao the Peshwa or even Jaswant Rao Holkar.(129)

The great staple produce which the province exported, and by which cultivation flourished, was cotton. The best cotton was grown in the Vale of Berar or the Payanghat districts lying north of the Ajanta Hills. Amraoti, Akot and Khemgaon were markets for cotton dealing. The cultivator of this part was a miserable and depressed creature. He was deeply in debt, and the only means he had of procuring an advance to pay for his land and his rent was by giving a "Laoni", i.e. making a contract with the village banker to supply a quality of cotton by a fixed date. (130)

"The general tendency of trade under the Marathas was

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129. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, pp. 127-128.

130. Ibid., pp. 225-226.

to increase, but certain causes prevented the rapid development of commerce.(131)

The Postal System:

Dr. S.N.Sen, says: "There was no regular postal department under the Peshwas. The work of military intelligence and such postal work as there was, was entrusted to Jasoods and Harkaras(132) The Jasoods represented a vital agency for transmission of news and messages and we find a reference to a very important Jasood Antaji Naid in the employ of Raghuji II. It appears that the agency of Jasoods and Harkaras was available to government and high personages only, and it was not for the conveyance of common mail.

Education and Communication:

In those days, State founded or State aided schools were unknown. But Raghuji fostered and encouraged education in an indirect way. There was no organised education department. Indirectly he encouraged the foundation of schools run by the scholars by making large grants in money or land to all the famous scholars of his time.(133) Alike under Hindu and Mohammedan rule, there were no schools expressly supported by the government. Neither

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131. C.P.District Gazetteers, Vol.A. Nagpur District, 1908, p.190.

132. Sen, S.N., op.cit., p.378.

133. Ibid., p.166.

the Maratha government nor its subjects recognised any duty on the part of the State to educate the people.(134) Keeping schools was not a condition for grants of money and inams for the support of Brahmans. Many of them, however, did teach both Sanskrit and Marathi. The fees were adapted to the circumstances of the pupil's parents, ranging from one anna to a rupee or more. Sanskrit was taught only to the Brahmans. Scholars of the lower caste were taught Marathi and Arithmetic. No outcaste was ever admitted into any school.(135) Speaking of the functions of the Maratha State (under the Bhonsles), Wills says, "there was no state expenditure on schools and communications",(136) and that the Nagpur Maratha following the political practice of the Mughals, recognised only certain primary functions of the State, such as maintenance of internal peace and security from external aggression.

Religious and Charitable Grants:

Grants to religious and charitable institutions by the sovereigns or their deputies were very numerous. Land had been made rent-free for the support of mosques, temples and holy places. Many payments from certain revenues had been allotted, and the right to collect dues from specified villages had been granted. The Dharm.mal grants, for the repair and maintenance of tanks, channels

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134. Russell, R.V., op.cit., p.103.

135. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, p.273.

136. Wills, C.U., British Relations with the Nagpur State during 18th century, p.218.

and drinking reservoirs, belonged in common right to certain villages. Village grants of land to the menial servants of the village community and the artizans were universally made. They were prized as hereditary possessions.

It was very common for the Mughal rulers, and for the Marathas, while they had power, to make petty allotments of rent free land for the maintenance of persons whose piety, poverty, or learning gave them some claim. Waste land was usually granted, often on a life tenure only, but a little interest made the rent free estate continued to heirs and tenures of this sort were among the oldest in the province. There seemed to have been a tacit understanding that grants of that kind, once bestowed, should not lapse. In the Umarkhed pargana of Basim, these personal grants to Brahmans and Pandits were made by the Peshwa very extravagently. The Peshwa got Umerkhed only in about 1760. Most probably he never made them at all, and was cheated by his Brahman officials.(137)

Institution of Slavery:

The slave system in Maharashtra did not have the horrors of slavery which obtained in Europe and America. The slaves were treated well.(138) Jenkins writes of the treatment accorded to slaves of Nagpur, "These are brought up in the families of their purchasers, generally as domestic servants and one frequently

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137. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer- p.104.

138. Sen, S.N.; op.cit., p.388; Vad and Parasnis, op.cit.,Diaries I, Shahu Chhatrapati, No. 336, p.212.

placed almost on an equality with their master's children in regard to food and clothing; and it is not common for persons who have no children of their own, to adopt their slaves as their sons and leave their property to them at their death. Task labour, or any work beyond what would be expected of a hired servant is never exacted from slaves; and in general, they are treated with kindness and consideration, and became more the attached servants, and it may be said friends of the families in which they have been nurtured, than the degraded slaves from no labour can be obtained except what is extorted by fear of punishment."(139) Sometimes the slaves were also set free. To quote an instance: "Ten female slaves in the service of a member of the Royal family (probably Raja's wife) had their heads anointed with oil, at the time of their mistress death and were set free. They were informed that they were at liberty to reside any where they liked".(140) If a woman would commit adultary, she was made a slave as a punishment. But on a petition made by her husband, she could be set free.(141)

SECTION -III

Administrative Difficulties of Raghuji

Raghuji did experience many difficulties in realising the whole revenue of his mamlat villages through his various subedars

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139. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.63.
140. Vad and Parasins, op.cit., No.368, p.213.
141. Ibid., No.370, p.214.

and officers.(142) A clerk of Vaidyas from Bhugaon explained to Vaidyas the difficulties of managing the Deshmukhi of the village and advised them not to rely on Zulaji Pant.(143) Naro Anant. Gadre wrote to Vaidya brothers from Nagpur in detail the difficulties in realising the revenue of Kalwad, Bhugaon, Tekodi, Peth Nagpur and Ramtek and also the remedies they would adopt.(144) Shankaraji Kano wrote from Nagpur to Vaidya brothers that he could not recover the money due from Chanda. When the officers of Chanda heard the news of the arrival of Janoji Bhonsle, they gave the management of Sabaji's district to Baburao Pant and ousted Gangaji Pant, but he was also unable to pay money to them.(145) Naro Anant's letter gives the following details of the difficulties in realising the revenue:-

(a) Janoji Bhonsle was recovering Kharchapatti under great pressure.
(b) It was difficult to recover Potdari.
(c) The chiefs of the states did not pay the dues.
(d) Shankaraji Kano quarrelled with Gangaji Pant Dewan and recovered rupees five thousand, and sent the amount with Subhana.
(e) The revenue of Chanda was disallowed by Janoji Bhonsle.
(f) The tailors money would be recovered.
(g) Two thousand rupees would be recovered from Bhugaon and Tekadari.

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142. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, ~~No.38~~, No.16, June 1944.
143. Ibid., No. 9, 6.1.1745.
144. Ibid., No. 22, 19.6.1748.
145. Ibid., No. 28, 7.8.1748.

(h) Chintepant had returned from Tuljipant's army and had incurred a debt; so he had been sent by Sena Sahib Subhah to collect the revenue of Kelarad.(146)

Naro Anant Gadre reported to the Vaidya brothers, the disorganised affairs of Raghuji's administration.(147) In one of the letters written by Rango Mahadeo to Vishwanath Bhat from Nagpur, he gave an account of the mismanagement in the administration of Bhonsle. He was sent there to recover the money from persons where payment was due. The debtors were important persons like Jivarao Mohite and Shamji Phulaji. He also demanded from Shivabhat Sathe the payment of the money, out of the sum brought by him from Bengal. He criticised the mismanagement in Bhonsle's administration.(148)

Financially, Raghuji was not well off. He was always short of money. Heavy expenditures were incurred due to his policy of expansion and invasions. Due to the mismanagement in his administration, the revenue was not fully realised. Because of this he was always burdened off with debt, and was harassed by his creditors, for instance Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya got his account settled with much difficulty.(149) Raghuji was asked to pay money to Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya.(150) He had deprived the Vaidyas of their villages,

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146. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.36, September,1749.
147. Ibid., No.41, 20.11.1946.
148. Ibid., Vol.V, No.35, 29.12.1952.
149. S.P.D.XX, 46; S.P.D.VI,11.
150. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.28, 11.7.1946.

viz., Bhugaon, Marad, and Rabalgaon, and kept them for his private use. He also ordered Jam Mehamad to recover the revenue collected by Vaidyas of the attached villages.(151) Raghuji was not ready to pay off the Vaidya's money, unless it was seen that Queen Tarabai and Pant Pradhan NanaSaheb have joined hands.(152) Raghuji had confiscated the Vaidyas' Inam villages, Potadari and Saranjami. People were surprised to see how the Bhonsle inclined to go against the Vaidyas. They could not recover money from Tuljopant, a Bhonsle's Sardar.(153)

Later on Raghuji ordered his various officers to pay the money to the Vaidyas. He ordered Krishnaji Narayan, Subedar of Chandrapur State, to pay the same to him in full, (for Vishwanath Bhat's ambassadorship) without leaving any balance. He also wanted that the debt of the Vaidyas should be paid out of the money brought by Shiv Bhat Sathe from Bengal as Chauthai. He also ordered the Vahiwatdars of certain villages to pay one percent of revenue to Vishwanath Bhat as remuneration for ambassadorship, in accordance with the terms of the Sanads granted.(154)

Raghuji was even unable to meet the expenditure of his son's marriage.(155) He could not even send Tarabai's dues in time owing to troubles in Bengal and on his southern border.(156) He

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151. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.28, 5.6.1748; Ibid., Vol.E, No.20, 16.2.1752.
152. Ibid., Vol.V, No.3, 19.5.1752.
153. Ibid., No.25, 27.10.1752.
154. Ibid., Vol. V, Nos. 29, 33 and 37..
155. S.P.D. VI. 25.
156. Ibid., XX, 55.

clearly avoided going to Satara, because he had to pay King Shahu's debt. Raghuji was upset owing to Shahu's urgent demand for money. For this he blamed Vishwanath Bhat and expected him to give King Shahu reasonable excuses for not sending money. Shahu did his best to get funds from Raghuji to pay off his debt. But Raghuji avoided the payment after repeated despatch of special messangers and agents.(157)

Raghuji used to borrow money from Vishwanath Bhat and Balam Bhat Vaidya and other bankers. (they were mostly men with money and were political advisers and Savakars, who had occasion to deal with Raghuji as creditors). Ramaji Naik was a well known money-lender of Central Provinces.(158) For the repayment of debt he used to give rights of Mokasa for collecting revenue from his villages. He gave the rights of villages to Vishwanath Bhat, in consideration of the debt.(159) He tried to arrange money for Raghuji and agreed to give rupees fifty thousand to him as loan.(160) Raghuji owed money to many persons. Nalbandi allowance of rupees two thousand was due in favour of Raghunath Bhatt and Nalbandi amount was owed by Raghuji to Padmoji Jachak.(161) Raghuji could not even pay the salary of his troops. Therefore, Mahadaji

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157. S.P.D., XX,26; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.21, 13.6.1748; No.30, 3.6.1749; Nos. 43 and 44, 18.10.1749.

158. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.65, 1754-1755.

159. Ibid., Vol.IV, No.12, 30.4.1743.

160. Ibid., No.39, 1744 and No. 30, 3.6.1749; Vol.III,Nos.41,57 &67.

161. Ibid., No. 16, 29.5.1747.

Krishna and Hari Krishna Kane complained that they had to return home owing to Raghuji's inability to supply the money, when they had accompanied him in Bengal campaign.(162) Because of all those financial hardships, Raghuji, began to realise the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages. For this King Shahu issued a strict warning to Raghuji's agent.(163)

A bond of debt of rupees ten thousand with interest was executed by Raghuji in favour of Vaidya brothers.(164) Raghuji tried to arrange to pay back the loans due to the bankers. He requested Vishwanath Bhat to pay money to Jayappa Shete and to Topinidhi Hansapuri Gosavi in payment of their debt.(165) Abaji Raje Mahadik acknowledged the receipt of rupees four thousand paid by Vishwanath Bhat on behalf of Raghuji.(166) King Shahu's debts were also paid by Raghuji. King Shahu in his own handwriting acknowledged the receipt of rupees ten thousand sent by Raghuji, which he owed to him as debt.(167)

Upon the non-payment of loan, the property of a person could have been attached. An instance may be cited: Queen Sakwarbai asked for help from Raghuji in attaching the property of the maternal uncle of Abaji Sakhadeo, who had taken loan from her but had died at Nagpur.(168) The Peshwa also ordered the village officer and

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162. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No. 8, 22.2.1748.
163. Ibid., No.38, 3.11.1746.
164. Ibid., Vol.III, No.71.
165. Ibid. Vol.IV, No.23, 27.8.1742; No. 35.5.8.44; Vol.V,No.26, 30.11.1753, No. 35, 9.1.1754.
166. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV,No.26, 12.5.1749.
167. Ibid; Nos. 31 and 42, 1749.
168. Ibid., No.25, 2.9.1947.

Sena Sahib Subah to collect the Mokasa in Berar.(169) King Shahu also granted money to Raghuji.(170) Vishwanath Bhat agreed to pay to Ranoji Bhonsle rupees twenty five thousand on behalf of Raghuji as the remaining revenue of Berar Prant belonged to him.(171) Raghuji always instructed his village officers to pay the money for the mamlat of Ranoji village.(172) Ranoji also requested Vishwanath Bhat to arrange to have his allowances paid without further delay.(173) Janoji Bhonsle also wrote to Vishwanath Bhat to pay to Ranoji Baba the money necessary for his expenses as ordered by Raghuji. Ranoji was the uncle of Raghuji,(174) who had earlier agreed to stop giving trouble to Santaji Bhonsle in Berar. His mother and Rayaji stood security for his conduct in the future.(175)

Due to mismanagement in Raghuji's administration, full revenue was never realised from his Mamlat. To run his government he used to borrow money from the bankers, which he could return with great difficulty. As Keso Krishna had written to Vishwanath Bhat; he was prepared to make use of unfair means, such as bribing Raghuji for the recovery of his money. Trimbakji Raje Bhonsle Waikar, Keso Krishna Shambekar and even Karande were ready to secure letters from Nana Saheb Peshwa and Queen Tarabai addressed to Raghuji concerning the same matter. A sum of rupees thirty two

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169. S.P.D.XX,39.
170. Ibid., VI,22.
171. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.II, No.76.
172. Ibid., Vol.III, No.87; Vol.IV, No.30, 1742.
173. Ibid., Vol.IV, No.30, 1744.
174. Ibid., Vol.V, No.22, 5.8.1754.
175. Ibid., No.43, December, 1750.

thousand was to be recovered independently from the cultivators of villages.(176)

Tarabai Kolhatkar lost her Mamlat of Berar and Krishnaji Govind was made its Mamlatdar. In this connection, Tarabai met Raghuji at Chande to get this injustice set right.(177) During his last days Raghuji had sent his son Janoji to Berar to keep the administration in good order, which was in a very disorganised state.(178) One significant defect of Raghuji's administration was that he never used to take the treasury with the army. Sadashiv-rao Bhau used to say, that treasury should always go with the army. Only then it could create confidence and enthusiasm in the soldiers. But Raghuji never did that. He was always in debt. Many of his soldiers refused to serve him due to the non-payment of their salaries.(179)

SECTION - IV

Raghuji's Administration - an Estimate

But in spite of all these difficulties Raghuji used to take interest in the welfare of his village people and did not harass them in any way. His officers were also instructed accordingly.

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176. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.13, 16.8.1752.
177. Ibid., Vol.V, No.34, 29.10.1750; S.P.D.XX,pp.1918 and 1937.
178. Ibid., No.22, 5.8.1754.
179. Kavya Itihas Sangraha- No.63.

"A permit was issued by Raghuji to Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya, ordering the officers not to levy any money and obstruct the taking of oxen with tas/cloth from Laskar to Satara.(180) Raghuji had a compromising attitude with the agriculturists and accordingly the orders were given to the Mokadams of the villages.(181) Clear orders were given to the village officers Deshmukh and Deshpande not to create any obstructions in collecting the revenues by the agents of Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya.(182) King Shahu had also issued an order to Mokadam of Boadhan not to bring any obstruction to Vaidya brothers for the enjoyment of the Inam lands granted to them by a Sanad of 23.3.44.(183) Raghuji did not levy much ghasdana on Khandar.(184) At the time of famine, etc., relief was given to the villagers. The market rates of the fodder were fixed.(185) Accounts of the various expenditures of the revenue were kept properly,(186) though sometimes the accounts were not kept at all.(187) For performing religious rites, money was paid from the State treasury.(188)

Raghuji had a team of many able and trustworthy Sardars, who served and helped him in various ways. For example, Raghunath Patwardhan alias Zimpe was a man of importance at the court of

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180. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.40, 19.11.1746.
181. Ibid., No. 11, 8.3.1748.
182. Ibid., No.40, 19.9.1749.
183. Ibid., Vol.IV, No.51, 2.12.1749.
184. S.P.D. VI, 150.
185. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.13, 1745.
186. Ibid, No.37, 23.10.1745.
187. Ibid., No.23, 5.6.1746.
188. Ibid., No.20, 25.6.1747; No.23, 5.8.1748; No.29, 3.6.1849.

Raghuji.(189) Antaji Vishnu, an officer, did recruiting work for Raghuji in order to make provision of things for Mavale people. For this work he was paid by the Bhonsle.(190) Shivaji Keshav. Talkute was an important person among Raghuji's advisers.(191) Naro Ballal was one of Raghuji's trustworthy person at the time of securing seven and a half lakhs for the release of Chand Khan.(192) The Vaidyas of Wai and Kolhatkar of Pandewadi had taken with them many families of Wai side to Berar. They rose to a high position in the Bhonsle administration.(193) Bhaskar Pant was his most capable commander-in-chief; he hoisted the flag of the Bhonsles in the far south-east of India.

The rule of the Nagpur Bhonsle contributed an immense advance upon the preceding system. In establishing over the greater part of the kingdom direct relations between the Raja and cultivating classes, they rendered a special service to the country. "Upon the Whole", Jenkins writes in 1816, "the general and direct authority of the Raja over every part of his dominions and the absence of the local influence of hereditaty zamindars are not unfavourable circumstances for the rayats who have thus fewer oppressions. But the introduction of direct Maratha rule, wherever it was well established, meant far more than this. It laid the first

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189. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.I,No.80, November, 1740.
190. Ibid., Vol.V, No.42, 17.10.1754.
191. Ibid., No. 65, 1754-1755.
192. Ibid., Vol.V, No.11, 19.4.1755.
193. Ibid., No.35, 5.11.1750.

foundation of a regular revenue system: it encouraged immigration; it fostered trade as a necessary means of converting of raw produce into species; and it stimulated the economic development of the country."(194)

"In the time of Raghuji I the price of grain (Juar) was one Khandi or four hundred pounds per rupee; under Janoji two hundred pounds per rupee; under Mudhoji one hundred fifty pounds per rupee. Under Raghuji II, it rose gradually for eighty to fifty pounds per rupee. Under Raghuji II, it rose gradually for eighty to fifty pounds per rupee. The territory which then formed the Central Provinces was in pre-Maratha times a back-water. The remotely connected trade conditions and political movements brought this back-water into the broad stream of Indian economy and history just as the British rule had since linked it with ocean currents of world politics and prices."(195)

Jenkins verdict that "the advent of the Marathas no doubt accelerated the general prosperity of the country" may be accepted as authoritative. The Nagpur Rajas granted indisputable authority to each one of a score of rival rebellious chieftains, and secured for an agricultural people that immunity from external disturbance and stability of village life which were essential preliminaries to progress. In Orissa, as in every other outlying portions of the kingdom, the Nagpur administration did not function well. But Sir W.Hunter's exposure of Maratha misrule in that remote and isolated

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194. Wills, C.U., Op.cit., pp.220-221.

195. Ibid., p.221.

province must not be taken as justifying a general condemnation of the Nagpur Government: wherever they could stabilize their authority, the rule of the Nagpur Bhonsles constituted an immense advance upon the system which had gone before it. Maratha trade and life expanded by contact with distant lands like Bengal. Silken clothes were brought from Bengal.(196)

"The Maratha administration was carefully adapted to the needs of the people, and changes of fundamental character were not warranted in a system which had so long stood the test of time. The country had prospered and the land revenue had attained its just maximums.(197) This state of affair continued from the establishment of the Bhonsle Raj upto 1749, when evils of misrule, excessive exaction and other corrupt practices began to raise their ugly heads. In the beginning of this period oppressive assessments were not carried to excess; but in the period following the war of 1803 increased assessment became a permanent feature of the revenue administration.

The dissension among the Maratha power immediately opened the floodgates of internal strife, and consequently foreign intervention. The Bhonsles could not remain aloof from the dissension and consequently their vast stretched kingdom gradually came under the British rule, and thus ended a glorious era of the Bhonsle rule in the Pre-British time.

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196. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.34, 23.12.1752.

197. Jenkins, Report of 1827, op.cit., p.96.

This remark of Wellesely about the administration of the Bhonsles seems to be an exaggeration:- "The administration of Raghuji was typical of the time-slow, corrupt and inefficient. All depended upon the personal pleasure of the ruler, his wishes and caprices, and those of his ministers and favourites. There was nothing like a system inherently capable of functioning on set and well known principles. The territories were a personal possession, the government a sort of paternal autocracy and the people subjects in the true sense of the word".(198) "These accounts of the Bhonsle's army, territory, and government lead Wellesely to regard the Nagpur State as a third rate power."(199)

This opinion of Wellesely about the Bhonsles of Nagpur seems to be biased, being based on the unauthentic records of that period. When we review their administration, we find that these charges levelled against them are totally baseless, false, and full of exaggeration. It is true that there were certain defects in their administration, which were common in those times.

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198. Nagpur Residency Records- Vol.I, pp.12-13.

199. Ibid., p.13.

CHAPTER - VIII

CONCLUSION - RAGHUJI BHONSLE - AN ESTIMATE

A large number of capable leaders whether acting with or against Baji Rao constituted in no small measure to the history of the period, and they deserve some notice. One of them was Raghuji Bhonsle, the founder of the principality of Nagpur. The Bhonsles, like the Dabhades and the Angrias, began to resent the controlling authority exercised on them by the Peshwa as they were all direct creations of the Chhatrapati, and in no way indebted to the Peshwa for their position. To compare Raghuji with other Maratha Sardars like Shinde, Holkar, and others, would be to do an injustice to him, as they all were the creation of the Peshwa, and had the support of the Peshwa. But as Raghuji was different, he should be given an honourable place among these Maratha Sardars.(1)

Like Debhade, Gaikwad, and Angrey and others, Raghuji also opposed the Peshwa, but for a short while only, as he felt that it would be of no use for himself or for the Maratha Kingdom to oppose the Peshwa. The rivalry between the two could harm the state. Raghuji, however, knew his limitations and managed to restrain his jealousy not allowing it to provoke a rupture with Baji Rao. The

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1. Purandare Daftar- Vol. I, p.153.

two kept up an attitude of mutual respect and dignity, and often also cooperated in their undertakings. The long-standing rivalry between Raghuji and the Peshwa was abandoned for sometime by the efforts of Shahu in the year 1743 A.D. Although Babuji Naik, Tarabai, Dabhade, Damaji Gaikwad, and the Nizam all tried their best to provoke Raghuji against the Peshwa, yet he did not pay any heed to their pleas, and remained true to his own principle. He always kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds, and never turned a traitor to his mother country. It must be said to the credit of both that their relations never came to be appreciably strained during their life time.

In his effort at unifying the Maratha State, however, the Peshwa, with all his patience and diplomacy, found it hard to reduce to obedience the two incorrigible chiefs— the Bhonsles of Nagpur, and the Angrias of Colaba.

The part played by the Bhonsles of Nagpur was so conspicuous in Maratha history that they came in for a large share in the total Maratha conquests over a period of more than fifty years and this naturally accounts for the magnitude of their records. Raghuji was the first and the most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur, and from him was descended the race of the Rajas of Nagpur. From the period alluded to, they had usually acted as a branch of the Maratha confederacy, but had invariably maintained their independence, forming treaties, remaining neutral, or acting either with or against the Peshwa, as it suited their interest or their policy.

The members of the Bhonsle family of Nagpur were military

leaders, with the habits generated by that profession. They had never left the plain manners of their nation; they were connected by the ties of blood, and by constant familiar intercourse, with everyone of their principal officers. Being born in the class of cultivators, they had a hereditary respect for that order, though not restrained by it from every degree of cupidity and plunder, yet they were seldom cruel to lower classes and almost always paid attention to established power and institutions, with the restraints arising from such considerations, the Rajas of Nagpur were, in theory, as absolute as the Maratha Chiefs of Malwa in the internal government of their dominions.(2)

Raghuji started his career in 1728, and by sheer dint of personal valour, combined with extreme circumspection, he rose to a position of eminence from the humble position of a mere soldier and succeeded in carving out for himself an independent field for action in what is now known as Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. He was a self-made man. He had risen to the status of a first rate nobleman at the court of Shahu by the dint of his merit. He, therefore, believed that his status was on a par with that of the Peshwa for all practical purposes. He resented the Peshwa's interference in his sphere of influence. It may be observed that for this mutual jealousy neither the Peshwa nor Raghuji was so much at fault. The defect lay in the weaknesses of the central authority. In the absence of a strong centre, the Marathas were not able to create an effective confederacy which could enforce its authority over all.

Shahu undertook costly distant expeditions in the north, as

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2. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.64.

the south was closed to him. He engaged in his service such active and vigorous men as Peshwa BajiRao, Senapati Dabhade, Sindhia. Udaji Pawar, Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, Malharrao Holkar and many others, and gave free scope to their valour and statesmanship.

Raghuji had either to remain quiet without hope of ever extending his dominion, or forcibly to create a new kingdom in the north. Due to his keen observation, Raghuji found plenty of fighting material scattered all over the country. Several leaders of Maratha bands had made incursions into the distant parts of Malwa, Gujarat and Berar. They had ambition and capacity, and only needed a field for their activities. To check their ambitious spirit was out of question. The central authority wielded by Shahu was itself weaker than that of any of these Maratha leaders- as for instance Kanhoji Angria of Colaba, Kanhoji Bhonsle, Khanderao Dabhade or Chandra Sen Jadav, were each singly more than a match for the weak Shahu. The only remedy was to utilise them for a common purpose and give them a coherent shape, i.e. to create a field in which all could work out their own destiny, in extending Maratha power and influence according to the means and capacity which each possessed.

Shahu gave a free hand, an ample field for action to any and every person who approached him for patronage. Most of the historical families which figure so largely in Maratha history rose to prominence under the direct encouragement of Shahu. Under the Saranjami system of the succeeding period, there was plenty of scope for lucrative military service all over the country. The exaction of Chauth supplied the plausible excuse for Maratha bands to under-

take distant expeditions.(3)

The founders of the Houses of Nagpur, Akalkot, Dhar, Indore, Ujjain, Baroda and other places, were all young boys whose capacity and valour were first recognised and rewarded by Shahu. The Bhonsles of Nagpur, the Bhonsles of Akalkot, Gaikwad, Angrey, and the Sawant of Sawant-wadi, they all used to give Khandani to the central power and provided their army to the central power for help. Raghuji's position was recognised by this central power.

When BajiRao the first Peshwa usurped the supreme authority, Raghuji who was Commander-in-Chief of the forces, and who held the province of Berar in Jagir, proceeded to turn it into an independent government. As the Mohammedan historian informs us, "this man was the first who assumed independence from being a tax-gatherer."(4) It appears, however, that he continued to acknowledge the supremacy of the Raja of Satara and the authority of the office of the Peshwa as the civil executive authority of the state. Although he set up an independent kingdom but maintained close cooperation with King Shahu and the Peshwa.

Raghuji was independent by nature. He did not care either for the King Shahu or the Peshwa. He did what he liked. That is why he abstained from interfering in the affairs of the

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3. Maharashtra Itihas Manjari-edited by Dattaraya Vishnu Apte, pp.226-229.

4. Selections from the letters- Despatches and other state papers-preserved in the Bombay Secretariate-Maratha series-Vol.I,p.12, Edited by George W. Forrest.

Central Government. Although he had a great respect for King Shahu, and he never openly disobeyed him, he sometimes defied his authority. In the same way he kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds. He did not want to work under somebody else. For instance, Shahu had sent him along with Fateh Singh Bhonsle in the Karnatak expedition, but there he took all the powers in his own hands, disregarded Fateh Singh Bhonsle, and made attacks according to his own wishes. Shahu had ordered him to go to Bhopal with his troops for the help of the Peshwa against the Nizam, but he did not obey him, and began to attack the northern regions of India. His invasions of Bengal and Orissa are a proof of his independent nature. He carved out an independent field of action for himself. Later on his example was followed by other Sardars, such as Multanji Holkar, Ranoji Sindhia and Pilaji Gaikwad who became founders of Regal dynasties. All these began to make war and peace without his knowledge and approbation, and to use the troops not for the advantage of the empire, but for their own aggrandisement. In course of time each assumed independent authority, and, while they professed nominal obedience to the Peshwa, they stood in the same relation to him as the Peshwa stood in respect to the Raja of Satara. Raghuji made treaty with the Nizam, without the knowledge or permission of King Shahu or the Peshwa. Terms of negotiations were settled between Safdar Ali Khan and Raghuji without the knowledge of Fateh Singh. Even Ramaji Pant joined hands with Raghuji in this affair. So the Peshwa was asked to chastise Raghuji, and thus to teach him a good lesson for his independent conduct."(5).

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5. S.P.D., XX, 21.

Raghuji was an opportunist. Bold and decisive in action, he was the type of a Maratha leader who saw in the troubles of other states an opening for the fulfilment of his own ambition, and did not even require a pretext for plunder and invasion. Thrice his armies invaded Bengal. He obtained the cession of Cuttack; Chanda, Chhatisgarh and Sambalpur were added to his dominion between 1745 and 1755, the year of his death.

The end of Kanhoji Bhonsle's political career in about 1730 A.D. opened up for Raghuji new opportunities in Berar, Nagpur and the region beyond to the east. Raghuji was not the man to lose such opportunities. He took full advantage of expanding his own independent kingdom. Raghuji distinguished himself as a capable soldier in Karnatak. His leadership and tact in the Karnatak campaign enhanced his prestige at the court of Shahu. The Marathas got a strong foot hold in Karnatak due to him. Pleased with his exploits Shahu conferred upon him, the Mokasa of Berar and Gondwana upto the frontiers of Katak, and appointed him Sena Sahib Subah in place of his uncle, the disobedient Kanhoji Bhonsle. The Karnatak campaign gave Raghuji eminence at the court of Satara, and eventually in the Maratha confederacy. It helped him in giving a status on par with the Peshwa. In fact his Karnatak success was very brilliant.

In Shahu's time there was a basic conflict about the expansion of Maratha Empire- whether to expand it in north or in south. As the south was closed for Shahu, the Peshwa was in the favour of expansion in the north. That is why the Peshwa had left the campaign of the south incomplete, and the Nizam took advantage of that situation. Now the task of finishing this unfinished work came

upon the shoulders of Raghuji. He took up the challenge and showed his military genius in his Karnatak campaign. He was wholly successful in his invasions of Karnatak. By a single stroke he defeated Chanda Saheb and Safdar Ali. This was his masterly expedition in southern most of India, where he hoisted the flag of Maratha kingdom, expanded its limits, and established the authority of the Marathas in India as the supreme power.(6) This proves his military genius. As the Peshwa had been successful in the north by defeating the Mughal Emperor and the Nizam at Bhopal, and in taking them into his own field, Raghuji was successful in the south by defeating the Nawabs of Arcot and Trichinopoly. But the expeditions towards south were more powerful, accurate, and full of war tactics. They were far superior and they established the authority and power of Raghuji in the Maratha Kingdom. He never lost ground there and thus he became an object of jealousy for the Peshwa. Trichinopoly was lost due to Babuji Naik and the jealousy of the Peshwa towards Raghuji and not due to his follies.

In the 18th century the Maratha power extended right upto the southern most part of the peninsula. The Maratha Governors actually held their sway over Trichinopoly and Madura. In 1741, Murar Rao Ghorpade was the governor of Trichinopoly and Appaji Rao held the governorship of Madura. This shows that the Maratha power, though centred at Poona, had its branches reaching far and wide. This was all due to Raghuji, whose main ambition appears to have

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6. S.P.D.XX, 21 and 22; Rajwade, op.cit., Vol.VI, 149; Aitihasik Patravayarahar, No.26.

been to thwart the Peshwa.

The only effective opposition to the establishment of his power came from the direction of Chanda Saheb, and to check his power and keep it in effective bounds became the watch word of his policy. He directed his energy towards preventing his expansionist activities by repudiating his claims to the revenue of the province under his command. He understodd too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long, protracted struggle with him. In spite of being separated from the heart of the Empire by a long distance, Karnatak province offered great possibilities to an ambitious man like Raghuji, and he was not slow to perceive them. His greatest act of bravery was the conquest of Trichinopoly and making Chanda Saheb a prisoner. Raghuji pursued the policy of southward drive so vigorously that it soon brought the Marathas to the gates of Pondicherry and for sometime made them the ruler of the Deccan. He had established beyond challenge the Maratha supremacy in the Deccan. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, Chanda Saheb, and Safdar Ali, who had attempted to follow a strong policy, failed miserably, and Chanda Saheb found himself in captivity of Raghuji, and he came to an understanding with his erstwhile enemy, by not only surrendering the whole of the territory belonging to him, but also by granting Raghuji's claim to Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the revenues of his province. His Karnatak raids were daring in conception and brilliant in execution. This was the greatest success the Maratha arms had ever achieved since the beginning of the Karnatak campaigns in 1725. According to Sardesai, "In the Treaty of Sangola, 1752, the role of Raghuji was very constructive."(7)

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7. Sardesai,G.S. op.cit., Vol.II, p.290.

It was due to his successes in the south that Mir Habib, the Dewan of Murshid Quli Khan, invited the Dewan of Raghuji, Bhaskar Pant, to attack the Katak province, an invitation which he accepted . Thus Raghuji got another opportunity for ipterfering in the matters of Orissa and Bengal also.

Raghuji was not slow to understand the power of the French. Weighing things in his mind, Raghuji might have preferred an honourable retreat to a futile attack. It is not proper to say that he retreated from Pondicherry on account of the French wine. This shows his wisdom and foresightedness. In spite of his promises to the French, Raghuji did not turn a traitor. As none of the Maratha chiefs helped the French in fighting an outside enemy, Raghuji offered his apology to Bussy in these words- "I can give you several reasons to support my conduct, but I shall content myself with giving you only one, viz. that I am a servant of the house of Shahu Raja for three generations, I could not help obeying the orders of Tarabai, who asked me to support Balajirao."(8) Mainly due to the attitude and policy adopted by Raghuji towards the French, the relations between the two remained amicable to the end. The French did not derive any benefit from the Franco-Maratha friendship. Pondicherry was restored to the French in 1697 by the Treaty of Ryswick in Europe. But although the French recovered Pondicherry, the Karnatak had changed hands. With the fall of Jinji, the whole province came under the Mughal domination. The contact with the Marathas, which was lost for a period of 47 years, was resumed in the year 1740, and the Marathas were once more destined to

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8. Hatalkar, V.G.; Relations between the French and the Marathas, p.95.

play an important part in routing out the French from India. This is all due to Raghuji who wanted to expand the Maratha kingdom in the east and the south of India.

The French also did not dare to interfere in the affairs of Raghuji, keeping in view the situation prevailing there at that time. Raghuji also laid down a compromising policy with the French Governor Dumas at Pondicherry. The charge levied by Shahu against Raghuji, that he lost the Maratha Kingdom because of the French wine, was baseless. The Maratha kingdom was not lost due to it. By his policy he kept the French power away from interfering in the Deccan politics. Chanda Saheb did not get the help of the French during the Maratha invasion, as it had been agreed upon, and thus he was defeated. It was Raghuji's foresightedness that he kept a compromising attitude with the French, as they might not give help to his enemies in the south.

After the raids of the Karnatak, Raghuji commenced a series of expeditions to Bengal, which terminated after a contest of ten years in the acquisition by the Marathas of Cuttack, and the promise of twelve lakh of rupees from the Nawab Aliwardi Khan as the Chauth of Bengal and Bihar. His greatest achievement was the establishment of authority over Bengal and Bihar. ~~His greatest achievement was the conquest of Bengal and Orissa.~~ When Shahu allowed Raghuji to extend his sway as far as Bengal, and collect Chauthai, he had not actually obtained a royal farman from Delhi to that effect. This shows his practical attitude in achieving his aims.

From the year 1750 A.D., the English and the French began

to take an active part in the Indian politics. But none of the Indian powers dared to oppose them openly. Even the Peshwa also did not involve himself in the struggle for ascendancy between the French and the English in India. But Raghuji, experiencing many difficulties, conquered the province of Orissa, and imposed Chauthai upon Bengal and Bihar, and this was not an insignificant or an ordinary job. As Peshwa, Shinde and Holkar had established their rule over Malwa and Delhi, so Raghuji had established his rule over these provinces, and, by his valour, he finished up the authority of the Mughals in these provinces at least for ten years. He gave employment to thousands of people there. All this shows his ability and capacity to work. But due to the weakness of his sons, the English took advantage and they took the Diwani of Bengal into their own hands, and finished the claims of Chauthai of the Bhonsles.

The Treaty with the Nawab of Bengal was a complete triumph for Maratha diplomacy. The 18th Century witnessed a change of the first magnitude in the political aspect of India, the transfer of Supreme authority from the Mughal rulers to the Marathas. This payment of Chauth was an acknowledgement by the Nawab of his defeat, of his inability to hold his own against the Marathas.

The Marathas entered the northern provinces of the empire in the first half of the 18th century. In Raghuji the policy of north-eastward expansion found its most fearless champion. He realised full well the weakness of the empire, the levity of its rulers, the incompetence and corruption of its officers; and made a bid for the conquest of this region and for imposing the Chauthai.

His Bengal campaigns were, however, not so brilliant and precise as that of the Karnatak..

Due to the rise of the English power in Bengal, the aim of Raghuji was not the territorial conquest of Bengal, but only to impose Chauthai there. That is why the English began to take interest in the affairs of the Bhonsles of Nagpur and ultimately in 1803, the Bhonsles were subdued by the English. On the other hand the English could not consolidate their power in Orissa, when it was under the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

As an opportunist in Bengal also, he sought the cooperation of the rebellious Afghans against the Nawab of Bengal. "When the mutinous Afghans sought the help of Raghuji against the Nawab of Bengal-Aliwardi Khan, Raghuji finding his advantage in attaching to his person and cause some thousand Afghans, all old soldiers, equipped at all points, set out for Birbhum.(9)

The campaigns of Bengal, though they had been concluded to the advantage of the Marathas, were financially not a success. They had added to the huge debt Raghuji had already contracted and he had to find new fields for conquests liquidating his debts. His Bengal atrocities are being exaggerated. The relations between Bengal and the Marathas were old. The misfortune of the nation was that the Peshwa and Raghuji were at cross purposes with each other at Bengal. The Peshwa should also be blamed for Bengal invasions and its failure.

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9. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.7.

Raghuji not only made his name in the conquest of Bengal, but he also exhibited great heroism in bringing uncivilised Gond kingdoms of the erstwhile Central Province under Maratha subjugation, consolidating them, and creating a Nagpur State as a distinct entity in which he stands quite on par with Malharrao Holkar, and any of the Sindhias. He colonized Nagpur and other cities with Maharashtra elements and made his state a strong and wealthy base by training a large band of devoted co-workers in war and diplomacy. He established himself in Nagpur, where he reigned nominally as the representative of the Gond prince from 1743 to 1755. By 1751, he had effected the conquest of the Devgarh territories, Chhatisgarh, Ratanpur, the capital of Haihaivanshi kingdom, capitulated without a blow in 1741 on the advance of Maratha General, Bhaskar Pant, four years afterwards, with the deposition of the last Raja, a Rajput dynasty ended. The fort of Chanda was delivered to Raghuji by the treachery of a Dewan in 1749 and two years later it was finally ceded to him. He quietly extended the conquest which had been made by his cousin and subdued several of the princes whose territories bordered on his government, but it was because of the disunion which occurred in the Devgarh Raja's family that he was enable to lay the foundation of a principality for himself, which gradually increased until it included within its limits the greater part of Berar. A considerable part of the Nagpur territory is supposed to have once belonged to the Gond Chiefs. Devgarh and Chanda formed the nucleus, as it were, of the Bhonsle dominion. The rights originally exercised by the Marathas in those provinces were acquired by treaty; and though the Chief of Chanda was soon reduced to the situation of

a mere prisoner, both in name and reality, the Devgarh prince preserved his nominal superiority over the Maratha masters of his country, and his officers were associated in most of the acts of governments relating to the revenue. Burhanshah, the Gond Raja, though allowed to retain the outward insignia of royalty, became practically a state prisoner, and all real power passed to the Marathas, as in the case of disputes in the Gond Kingdom. Raghuji took complete advantage of the dissensions when they occurred between the brothers.

Raghuji's territory included the area from Berar to Cuttack. The Gond Kingdoms of Garha-Mandala, Chanda or Chandrapur and Devgarh were in his possession. Berar proper was under the dual authority of the Bhonsles and the Nizam. The strategic forts of Gawilgarh and Narnala with the territory attached to them were actually exclusively under Raghuji's possession. The fort of Manikdurg in the Mahur area belonged to him. The states of Chhatisgarh were also under his sway as important outposts between Nagpur and the province of Cuttack. He was the real founder of the Nagpur state. He established the kingdoms of Nagpur and Berar on firm foundations. The importance of his position as such has always been recognised in local history. Thus, before his death, Raghuji the Great had laid the foundation of a territorial state, nominally subordinate to the Head of the Maratha Empire, which comprised the following areas:-

(a) The former Raj Gond states of Devgarh and Chanda with their dependencies.

(b) The former Rajput states of Chhatisgarh (Raipur and

Ratanpur) with their dependencies.

(c) The Rajput state of Sambalpur with its dependencies; and

(d) The Mughal province of Orissa with its dependencies.†

The acquisition of this vast territory speaks for Raghuji generalship. Over this wide tract of country he asserted an exclusive right to the collection of the revenue. From Bengal and Bihar, he claimed an annual payment of twelve lakh of rupees by way of Chauth. In Berar he claimed the right to share the revenue with the Nizam under the curious system of do-amli, besides appropriating to himself the fortresses of Gawilgarh, Narnala and Manikdurg with the districts immediately dependent on them. He might have lost a few battles but he always won the war.

In diplomacy he was second to none. By his mounting success he won the confidence of Shahu and on critical occasions he was consulted by him. Shahu, prior to his death, had called Raghuji to Satara to discuss the matter of succession to the Chhatrapati's throne.

Nor did Raghuji's successes end here. On the death of King Shahu in 1749, he was summoned to Satara where, as the leader of the Maratha Sardars, his attitude had a decisive influence on the course of events. His personal ambition was now controlled by the caution of age and the admonition of experience, and in spite of the fact that Shahu's adoption of Raghuji's son Mudhoji, which had been strongly convassed, was negatived by the dramatic discovery of a direct heir of Shivaji, in the person of Ram Raja, a son of Shivaji II, Balaji Peshwa secured Raghuji's support in his favour.

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† SEE MAP ON PAGE, 314 A.

Raghuji approved of Ram Raja's succession to the titular sovereignty, escorted him to Poona and received in return from his complainsance new Sanads for Berar, Gondwana and Bengal.

Raghuji and the Peshwa were not always on good terms with each other. Raghuji always avoided an open clash with Baji Rao knowing well his ability as also the influence he wielded over the Chhatrapati. On the other hand Raghuji's valour kept the Peshwa alert and the clever Peshwa also knew the power of Raghuji, so he was always careful to keep a compromising attitude with Raghuji and acting on the advice of his brother Chimnaji Appa, the Peshwa settled his differences with Raghuji amicably. But actually neither Baji Rao nor his son Balaji was able to command the services of Raghuji in their capacity as the Peshwa or Prime Minister. So long as Shahu was alive such differences were not allowed to take a serious turn. After Shahu's death Raghuji respected the Peshwa's authority. He did not join the Peshwa's opponents in the Maratha confederacy, being convinced that he was the ablest man among the Marathas to occupy the Peshwaship.

Due to the strained relationship between Raghuji and the Peshwa, the latter also doubted the sincerity of Raghuji, as in one of his letters to Ram Chandra Baba he writes, "Raghuji entered into Mahar division. He came from Berar. His desire is to collect Ghasdana tax from our territory. This intention of Raghuji is being conveyed to me by different Mahal officers. Raghuji writes big letters showing regards and expresses brotherly feeling. But this is not true. He is a pretender and you known this. We should also

write him affectionate letters.(10)" Shrewd and alert as both the Peshwa and Raghuji were, they fully realised the advantage of preserving amity with each other and of fully cooperating in measures of mutual benefit. He adroitly avoided an open rupture with the Peshwa. As Baji Rao wrote to Chimnaji Appa. "Raghuji is very bold and wise. We have to control him, because he had defeated Avaji Kavade. But this is no time to displease him, as Nadirshah is going to attack our country. So we have to take Raghuji into our confidence, and should cooperate with him, instead of passing strictures against him."(11)

When Raghuji found that Karnatak was not a congenial field for his ambitious designs, he transferred his activities to the north, and north-east, where in 1742, he precipitated an open conflict with the new Peshwa Balajirao, a conflict which, unlike that of the Dabhade ten years before, happily had no tragic consequences. It was eventually adjusted at Satara by Raja Shahu in the autumn of 1743. Thereafter, the two prominent figures, Raghuji and the Peshwa though often mutually jealous and plunged into intrigues against one another, managed nevertheless to avoid an open clash, and often actually joined hands in furthering the extension and prestige of the Maratha Raj. This proves that Raghuji had a compromising attitude for settling the matters amicably.

Indeed, the fact that Shahu's death passed off without a bloody revolution is mainly due to the good sense of Raghuji, who,

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10. Kavyaitihas Sangraha No.59.
11. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, p.334.

though repeatedly urged by the King to visit him on his death bed, managed to postpone his arrival at Satara till after his master's death and until the succession of Ram Raja had been finally settled. Having clearly grasped the position of affairs at that critical juncture, and having been convinced that the Peshwa alone was capable of handling the critical situation to the best advantage, Raghuji gave the latter his whole-hearted support, in spite of the pressure brought to bear upon him from influential quarters. Had Raghuji joined the intrigues of Tarabai and Damaji Gaikwad, the odd would probably have been too strong for the Peshwa to cope with and would possibly have launched the kingdom upon a disastrous civil war. This phase of Raghuji's character is disclosed in numerous papers belonging to those times.

Raghuji knew well when to oppose and when to yield to his opponents. He was not prepared to allow matters to be carried to the breaking point un-necessarily. In one of his letters to Nana Peshwa, he writes, "the late Shrimant Bajirao was kind to me. But difference arose when we had a clash with Avaji Kavde who had entered Berar. All these matters should now be forgotten and I should be treated as your man."(12) Peshwa on learning the news of the death of Raghuji, wrote,- "Raghuji was a respectable nobleman. His death indeed a matter of great regret. Of late Raghuji was of much help to us."(13)

Raghuji was not the man to submit either to threats or to

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12. S.P.D. XX, p.30.

13. Ibid., p.68.

hostilities. Even Tarabai appealed to the Maratha blood of Raghuji and Fateh Singh Bhonsle to save the state from Brahman domination but none of them listened to her as the Peshwa had already taken them into his confidence and they were whole heartedly supporting his policy. Tarabai kept up to the last secret political relations with all the leading Maratha Sardars such as Raghuji Bhonsle, Fateh Singh Bhonsle, the Angre brothers, the Gaikwads, and the Dabhades.(14) All this shows the importance of Raghuji in the Maratha Court. He was occasionally consulted on all important matters of state, and was sent on war expeditions to distant places in the land. His presence and policies kept the Peshwa alert, so the Peshwa also adopted an attitude of compromise towards Raghuji, and did not oppose him openly. During the last years of his life his relations with the Peshwa and King Ram Raja were very cordial. The Peshwa also showed his full confidence in him. The clever Raghuji knew the weaknesses of Tarabai, and he was always careful to keep her in good humour by fluttering her vanity by outward submission. He never opposed openly the plans and policies of Tarabai, but he also did not submit to her intrigues and unworthy party politics. This is also another proof of his independent nature.

Raghuji was not slow to grasp the political situation prevailing in the area from the distant Karnatak to Gondwana, and he finally threw his lot with Shahu, who was by then a well-settled Chhatrapati. This was indeed a wise decision which benefitted Raghuji, as also the Maratha expansion.

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14. S.P.D.VI, 211 and 213.

The Nizam got the support of the English and the French. They did influence the politics of those times and played a prominent part in bringing out the ups and downs of the Indian rulers and powers. They, however, did not help the Marathas, but helped their opponents. In spite of these odds, Raghuji was successful in establishing the Maratha authority in the far off south-east region of India, which was lost due to the jealousy of the Peshwa for him.

Many people think and opine that owing to the ambitions of Raghuji, the Peshwa with the intention of keeping him away from his own sphere of activity in the north, had shown him the way of activity to fulfil his ambition in the eastern coast of Bengal and Karnatak, and in this way he directed the ambitious activities of one of his rivals to another side of India. Raghuji also wanted to get the robes of Peshwaship after the death of Baji Rao I, and the throne of the Maratha kingdom after the death of the issuless King Shahu. That is why the Peshwa tried his best to keep Raghuji away from his own path of victory and influence. If Shahu and the Peshwa would have guided him properly and would have shared his troubles and responsibilities, Raghuji would have been able to achieve far greater results in his plans and policies than he was actually able to.

Raghuji was also a very troublesome Sardar of Shahu. He disobeyed the King Shahu and harassed him like anything in paying to him the annual tribute,(15) but still the King used to praise

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15. Shejwalkar, T.S.- Nagpur Affairs, Vol.I, p.193.

him.(16) He broke his relation from the Maratha Mandal and created his own independent kingdom.(17) 'Both Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, were brave and powerful and had the courage to oppose the King or the Peshwa, but Kanhoji Bhonsle was an eccentric, and Raghuji was very shrewd and politically wise. Kanhoji was a total failure but Raghuji became very famous. He extended the territories of the Maratha Raj. Ranoji had entrusted all his work to Raghuji.(18)

Raghuji was a personal favourite of King Shahu. He used all his influence with the King to prevent the nomination of Bajirao's son Balaji as the first minister. The King, however, was wise enough to see that for all his skill as a hunter and his courage as a soldier, Raghuji was unfit to be the Peshwa.

Raghuji had pretensions (founded on his descent) to the state of Satara, favoured the eventual accomplishment of those pretensions, but the dread of the superior power of the Peshwa prevented him from fulfilling those pretensions. Under these circumstances it cannot be supposed that the Raja of Berar considered himself to be subordinate to the Peshwa, although it was in his interest to act with him on important occasions, as a member of that empire of which the Peshwa was the executive civil authority. On those occasions when they met, the Raja of Berar was treated (in consequence of his

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16. Purandare Daftar-Vol.I, No.140.
17. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat, p.335.
18. Shejwalkar, op.cit., p.125 ; Sardesai, op.cit., p.374.

descent) as superior in rank, and, in his capacity as the first constituent member of the empire, claimed the right of sending to the Peshwa an address of honour on his accession to office.(19)

Hastings on July 9, 1778, paid his tribute to Raghuji in these words:- "Mudhoji Bhonsle's family has always borne a considerable rank among the powers of India. His father Raghuji subjected the provinces of Bengal to the Chauth under the government of the most able chief that ever ruled them."

The rise of the Nagpur kingdom did not take up in the time of Great Shivaji. When Shahu came to Maharashtra after his release from the Mughal Camp, Bhonsles did help him in making his position strong. Thence the Bhonsles of Nagpur became part and parcel of the Maratha Raj. Due to the ambitious and powerful Raghuji, the power of this house began to grow, and many parts of eastern and southern regions of India came under his sway.(20)

Forrester gives an account of Nagpur State in these words, "The revenue of Nagpur were computed at a crore of rupees in the time of Raghuji, who being at the head of a large army and generally in the field, collected a tribute from all the territories intervening between his capital and Bengal".(21) Later on it yielded only 59 lakhs. The military reputation of the Nagpur House was at its highest during Raghuji's reign.

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19. Extracted from pp. 256-257 of Bengal Papers relative to the Maratha war of 1803 printed in order of the House of Commons 5th and 22nd.June, 1804.
20. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol. VI, p.167.
21. Rennell-Memoire of a map of Hindustan, p.cxxix-cxxxi.

Raghuji should receive the major portion of the credit for the prosperity of Nagpur. He brought along with him a number of Maratha and Brahman families from western Maharashtra, who infused new order and life in the administration of Nagpur and Berar. Cultivation in and around Nagpur improved under Raghuji. A number of Kumbi or cultivators' families settled in the territory under Raghuji. The credit for settling the weavers of Kost also goes to Raghuji.

The Maratha rule in the Nagpur territories constituted for the mass of the people an immense advance upon the system of government, which had preceded it. Before the Marathas came, the country was divided into a number of petty semi-indigenous principalities. Each of these was again subdivided into big and small chiefships. The states themselves were frequently at war and were always at enemity with each other, and every bigger and smaller chief was ready, as soon as external control was relaxed, to break out into hostilities with his neighbours. There could have been under such a system but slender security for life and property and but little encouragement for either trade or agriculture. But under the sway of the Bhonsles, "the country is said much to have improved and to have received a great increase of population."(22) Jenkins's verdict that the advent of Marathas "no doubt accelerated the general prosperity", may be accepted as authoritative.(23)

With Raghuji the Great, the great days of the Nagpur have had in fact departed. Just as the Mughal Empire attained its greatest

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22. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.106.

23. Ibid., p.75.

strength and almost its maximum extension in the life of Akbar the Great, so the Nagpur state reached the zenith of its political and military reputation under Raghuji. His vigorous personality consolidated the kingdom, and drew from it a revenue which his sons Janoji and Mudhoji could never raise. The power of the Nagpur State began to decline under Janoji. Raghuji admitted no partner to his territorial control, while his successors were hampered by the semi-independent status which custom conferred on their near-relations in important appanges such as Chanda and Chhatisgarh.

His four sons could not keep up the reputation of the Nagpur House. After his death, dissension arose between his four sons and none could look after the vast empire left by him. The difference between the two Bhonsle brothers weakened their power. Nagpur, after the death of Raghuji, became a hot bed of political intrigues. Many courtiers exploited the family faction for their selfish ends. The two brothers were finally reconciled to each other, because Janoji, who was without a son, decided to adopt Mudhoji's son as his successor. The credit for this amity, however, goes to the situation than to the wisdom of either of the brothers. The Peshwa had used both his effection and good offices in solving their internal dispute, but with no result. Their wisdom and valour was of no use to the state.(24)

The Maratha States were never content to be self supporting, and Raghuji's greatness really vested on his far-flung military expeditions. A leader who carried his arms to Allahabad in the north,

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24. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol.VI, p.167.

to Madras in the south, and to Bengal in the east was a man worth following. Thus his activities were not confined to the Nagpur state only, but spread to a far greater area of this country. His vigour in the field brought him wealth, made his services popular, and won for him a great reputation.

Like Bajirao I, Raghuji too was loved by his followers. He had capable and trustworthy persons like Bhaskar Pant, Raghuji Karande, Tuloji Pant, Naroji Jachak, Rakhmaji Ganesh, Krishnaji Atole, and others as his adherants. Baburao Konher Kolhatkar was his intimate adviser, who cooperated with Janoji; Raghuji's ablest son, in transacting current business pertaining to his rule of Nagpur. The leniency with which he treated the Gond Raja deserves particular mention, as it shows a trait of humanity in the Marathas worthy of highest pitch of civilization. He not only abstained from all sorts of personal violence, but allotted three lakh of rupees annually for the Gond Raja's maintenance and the fort for him to live in by no means as under confinement. He suitably rewarded the person who rendered help to him. As this narration illustrates, "The country from Dongertaul to this village (Luckna-down) an extent of 71 miles is held in Jagner by Mohammad Ummekhan, a Pitan Chief, to whose father the great Raghoji, the first granted it in reward for services during his reduction of the Gondwana and the northern part of Berar." (25) Raghuji had the real ability and strong character which distinguished Baji Rao the Peshwa, or even Jaswant Rao Holkar. But after him none of the Bhonsles had possessed those qualities.

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25. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.77.

Raghuji had the twin qualities for success in politics and diplomacy-cunningness and treachery. Appaji had complained to the Peshwa that he was harrassed by Raghuji when he was left to manage the affairs of the Peshwa's estate in his absence and complained that these were not relieved by his master.(26) Sometimes he used to behave in a very peculiar way. Keso Krishna Shambekar had written to Vishwanath Bhat that he could not enjoy the Mamlat of Akot due to the queer nature of the Bhonsle. In Berar there was famine on account of want of rain, and so there was no sowing of Rabi crop. But still he had to pay Rs. 30,000 for that year's Rasad to Raghuji, and Rs.1,000 to Mudhoji and Rs.11,000 for miscellaneous expenses. Beside this Krishnaji Govind and Raghuji Karande and other concerned persons had gathered together at Akot to receive the Ghasdana amount. Raghuji did not grant any concession in realising the dues, to Shambekar for all these natural calamities.(27) His attitude was also very defiant which set at naught the authority of the Peshwa, and of Fateh Singh Bhonsle. The Peshwa was informed about the movements of Raghuji and his independent dealings with the Nawab Safdar Ali Khan.

Raghuji was a little but selfish by nature. He welcomed the news of Chimnaji's death, because he was relieved of the check on his activities. He made himself the master of the situation and realised large amounts of money from the Nawab Safdar Ali by promising him help when the latter would be in difficulty. He even instigated

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26. S.P.D.,XX, 6.

27. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.26 of 29.10.1752.

the Nawab of Arcot, who began to give evasive replies to the Peshwas demands of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi; and evaded the payment of all these dues.(28) He could not trust everybody. Nobody could know his whereabouts when marching with his troops. Raghuji marched towards north without divulging the place of his destination.(29)

His financial position was always very bad. He was always full of debt. He could not return the money to those from whom he had borrowed. Therefore, he was harassed by his creditors. Only Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya got his account settled. To fill up his empty treasury, he used to realise money by fair means or foul. He demanded a ransom of three lakh of rupees for Jankiram's son's release, and illegally recovered the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages.(30) For this action of his, Shahu had to issue a strict warning to the agent of Raghuji, against recovering the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages. Sometimes Shahu had to take strict action against the aggressive attitude of Raghuji.(31) Thus Raghuji used to adopt an aggressive attitude, whenever such an opportunity would arise. He was a political genius-an expert in war tactics, administration and diplomacy. In diplomacy he was second to none; only Santaji Ghorpade could come on par with him in war tactics. In diplomacy it would appear that Nana Saheb Peshwa was far superior to Raghuji, but in establishing a separate kingdom, there was none other

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28. S.P.D. XXVIII, 9 and 10.
29. Ibid., XX, 42.
30. Ibid., XX, 6 and 46; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1946.
31. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1746.

than Raghuji. He was the leader of those who opposed the plans and policies of the Peshwa. The Peshwas rose due to their family background, but the glory of Raghuji rests on his own valour and efforts. His best kingdom speaks of his glory during the Peshwa's time. He was first of all a very good soldier, and he had faith in his troops. It is said, "Raghuji did not keep a single pie with him. All money he used to spend on his soldiers with their advice. He never uttered a single word when he was short of money. He used to say, "that is right which God wills." He was not a luxury-loving person. He did not want to rest or relax and used to take his food on the horse back when riding on it."(32) This shows his sense of duty and large heartedness.

Besides being a very good soldier, he was a very intelligent man, courageous and active. He kept himself well informed and was occasionally consulted by others in all important matters of the state. He was also a very good hunter and a bold horseman. King Shahu was also very fond of hunting. Therefore, he used to take Raghuji along with him in his hunting expeditions. Once he saved the life of Shahu from the claws of a tiger. Therefore, Shahu was pleased with Raghuji and he in turn took advantage of Shahu's favour.

He was not an anti-Brahmin. Duff has charged him, with being jealous of the Peshwas due to the Brahmin ascendancy. But this seems to be wrong. He had many trustworthy Brahmin Sardars like Tuljoram, Bhaskarram Kolhatkar, Shivaji Keshav Talkute, and politicians

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32. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.38.

like Konherram Kolhatkar, Vyankoji, Ragho Ballal, and Raghunath Bhat Jhipre Patwardhan, etc., who had worked with him. There is a letter which shows how Raghuji helped the Brahmins of Mehkar. They had complained to Raghuji that they were harassed by his troops. Thereupon, Raghuji gave them a letter of assurance that in future they would not be harassed in any way.(33) This is a proof that he was not anti-Brahman, but had sympathy with every class of people, and there were no caste feelings in him. Mamaji Tembrekar of Nagpur, who is very rarely mentioned in other papers wrote to Vishwanath Bhat about the relations between the members of the Bhonsle family and that of Raghuji Karande. They, he said, "were against the brahmins, and wanted to get rid of them."(34) This casting of blame by Mamaji Tembrekar seems to be incorrect.

According to the tradition, and customs of those times, Raghuji had also six wives and seven concubines. Out of these thirteen women, six became satis after his death.(35) Besides his four legitimate sons, he had an illegitimate son also, named Mohan Singh. (36) The Subah of Chhatisgarh was given to Mohan Singh. Perhaps he had a weakness for the fair sex. Once he was attracted towards two daughters of a bangle-seller of Nagpur. He ordered that those two girls should be brought to his Darbar. Hearing this the bangle seller became very furious, and refused to send his daughters to him. Upon this Raghuji ordered that the bangle seller's house be plundered and he be brought before him.(37) In fact his private life

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33. Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.I,No.35.
34. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.27, of 3.11.1952.
35. S.P.D. XX,79 and 80; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.60.
36. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.30 of August, 1746.
37. S.P.D.XX, 34. This letter throws valuable light on Raghuji's character and his ways of doing things.

was influenced by the customs of those times. Even two years Before his death, he had intended to marry the daughter of Deoji Shirke, but due to certain reasons the marriage was postponed.(38) In 1748, Raghuji had the plan of marrying again at the time of the marriage of his daughter.(39)

He was very pious by nature. He was an ardent devotee of Ram, although his family deity was Shankar. He installed the idol of Ram at Ramtek and revived the importance of this place of epic fame. On his letter head, he used to write 'Sitakanta'. He used to pay due respect to the sadhus and saints, as also to Ramdasi Devbaba of Bhandara and to Pirasha Muslim Saint. This shows that he had no communal feelings in his heart of hearts. He made land grants to many temples and holy places. When Raghuji was in Karnatak, there a sadhu gave him the idol of Ramchandra as a Prasad and asked him to worship that idol, and said that he would be benefitted. Shahu also permitted him to use the flag of God Ramchandra. He gave him the Bhagwan flag and Jari Patka as his flag. From that time the Jari Patka and the saffron coloured flag became the emblems of Raghuji's army. (40) He respected the family of Ramaji Pant Kolhatkar till the end of his life, because he had taught him the worship of Ram.

Raghuji was also interested in building towns etc. "He was the founder of the city of Nagpur, which he surrounded with a rampart,

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38. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.4 of 13.5.1753.
39. Ibid., No.20 of 506.1748.
40. Nagpur Kagadpatra, essay No.8; Aitihasik Patravyavahar,No.7.

formerly it was only an insignificant village, appertaining to the fort prior to his capture of it. It is situated on a fine high plain which is richly cultivated and produces fine wheat and bounded by hills to the north-west and south. The Nag river, a rivulet running to the southward, gives name to the town. The houses are generally neatly built and covered with files, the streets are narrow and filthy."(41) He made Nagpur his ihdependent place of living,but still he did not leave the side of the Peshwa. The essentially Maratha character of the town of Nagpur, which was in many respects a prominent rival to Satara, indicated that Raghuji and his co-adjustors took incessant pains to transfer to that place a fresh stock of Deccan people of all classes and to colonise with them the north-eastern regions of central India, in order to bring them under a refining influence. After conquering the Gond kingdoms he made Nagpur a grand capital of his kingdom. He contributed greatly to its political, social and cultural life. His successor Janoji took part in the wars between the Peshwa and the Nizam. But later on he had in turn betrayed both of them, contrary to the policy of his father. Consequently the Peshwa and the Nizam, both of them united against him and sacked and burnt Nagpur in 1765. Amraoti town is said to have been founded by Raghuji. At one time there was a representative of the Nizam, as well as one of the Bhonsle, at the place. Bhonsle used to receive 60 p.c. and the Nizam 40 p.c. of the revenue.(42)

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41. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.72.
42. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, p.157.

Raghuji, with good taste selected a site, Wun-Bham, for his residence. It was at this place that Raghuji had, it is said, a divine information of the bright future that lay before him, that of rising to regal power, and it was from this place that he had fled on one horse to Devgarh to escape assassination by Kanhoji and his son Rayaji.(43)

In the long and distinguished galaxy of Maratha Chiefs, Raghuji Bhonsle was unequalled for the doings and originality of his genius and value of his achievements. The story of Raghuji deals with twenty seven eventful years of Maratha history. He is being looked upon as one of the greatest personalities in Maratha history and the story of his career has an abiding interest. His achievements may be summed up as the establishment of the Maratha supremacy in the south-east and of political hegemony in the north. When he rose as leader of the Maratha people, the Maratha State was in a perilous condition. It was a house divided against itself, menaced on the east by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, its march southward was barred by the Nawab of Arcot and Trichinopoly, and its southern sea-coast was in the foreign hands. In this way when the Maratha affairs were in a state of turmoil and utmost confusion, there appeared on the Maratha side a soldier of enterprise and courage, Raghuji Bhonsle. During the critical period of 1740-1755, his role was in no way inferior to that of any other character who passed across the screen of history. He played a notable part in the Maratha struggle against the Mughals in the 18th century. When Mughals had the upper hand in the political affairs of this country

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43. Lyall, A.C.,Berar Gazetteer, p.179.

and all seemed lost after the death of Shivaji, he successfully opposed and faced the authority of Mughals in far off Karnatak, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It shows how the courage of a single individual can materially affect the course of history. At his death he left the nation strong and united. His friendship was solicited by the Rajputs, the Mughals and the Marathas alike.

His greatest diplomatic triumph was entering into the treaty with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan of Bengal, securing to Shahu, Shivaji's conquests and legitimatizing the Maratha claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the Subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He thus knew at first hand the currents and cross-currents of home as well as of foreign politics. He laid firmly the foundation of Maratha power in the territories of Garha-Mandala and other small, principalities beyond the Narbada, and paved the way for a further advance. He understood too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long protracted struggle with them, but he was not a man to surrender his authority without a contest. He behaved the Marathas to deal with the Nizam tactfully. That Raghuji won him over to his side was due to his successful diplomacy.

In the Maratha history one is bound to give a honourable place to Raghuji. By his victories and the acquisition of vast kingdom, he brought the Maratha power to its zenith, though in the beginning of the nineteenth century it was destined to be wiped out from the map of India. Even before the independence, the kingdoms of Sindhia, Holkar and Gaikwad were in existence, but the kingdom of the Bhonsles of Nagpur had fallen. It was due to his incapable sons,

who could not keep up its flag high. Along with Raghuji, the power of the English had also begun to rise in Bengal. Due to family dissensions, the Bhonsle brothers became more or less inactive. That period was a period of much political activity in Indian history. As it has been said- "A state comes to ruin through disunity and this disunity becomes the cause of destruction of countless households."

Raghuji had a remarkable personality, which for nearly thirty years bulked largely in Maratha history. He was the first and most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur. He was by far the most formidable of the Maratha Chiefs, both by the extent of his dominions, and the goodness and number of his troops. On the whole in the Maratha operations no small part was played by Raghuji. He was not a man who would allow his grip on the conquered provinces to relax. He knew the value of continuous hammering. He perceived that the only practicable policy that could succeed in the circumstances was the policy of 'going through'. After having effected the conquest of Orissa and being arrived at a final understanding with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan in 1751, Raghuji led a peaceful life and did not concern himself with the various important projects and expeditions which the Peshwa restlessly carried out in the Karnatak region, because he had long been suffering from a stomach complaint and was almost bedridden during the last two or three years of his life. This great general who extended the Maratha power as far as Katak, breathed his last at Nagpur on February 14, 1755. Thus till his death Raghuji remained a personality to be reckoned with in the politics of Maharashtra.

Thus ends the saga of a great Maratha Chief, brave and fair,

Raghuji died a most fascinating figure in a romance of war and intrigues.

He occupies an important place in Maratha history during the Pre-Panipat period and is also partly responsible for the ups and downs of Maratha history in his time. It is less widely realised how prominent and independent a part he played in shaping the history of this country. Hence he deserves to be accorded his due place among the heroes of Maratha history and we should do justice to this remarkable ruler and statesman whose exploits fill such a wide canvas of India's history.

APPENDIX : I

All Bhonsles consider themselves as Sisodia Rajput, and trace their origin to the House of Udaipur. At the time of Shivaji's Coronation Balaji Avji Chitnis made a deliberate attempt to prove that Shivaji, a Bhonsle, was a scion of the Chittor ruling family. Vaidya is of the opinion that Marathas do not belong to the Kshatriya clans of Northern India, but they belong to the old Arya Kshatriyas of South. He, however, accepts that Shivaji Maharaj's family belonged to the Sisodia House.(1) This view is also supported by Rajwade.(2)

Gupte gives another story regarding the coming of the Bhonsles from Rajasthan.(3) During 1296-1316 A.D., there was a Muslim empire in India. Alauddin Khilji was the ruler. He came to know that in Chittorgarh, the Rana had a most beautiful wife named Padmini. In order to take Padmini, Alauddin Khilji attacked Chittor. His army began to harass the Rajputs. So the Rajput states of Rajasthan organised themselves and faced Alauddin Khilji with courage. But due to superiority in numbers and the power of the Yavans, they had to withdraw. All the Rajput rulers combined together had defended their kingdoms, but in vain. The Muslims proved superior and the result was that the Rajput kings with their families fled away from Rajasthan

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1. Vaidya, C.C.; Madhyayugin Bharat, Part II, appendix-5.
2. Rajwade Prastavana- Chitra, pp. 230-233.
3. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.5.

and settled at different places in the south with their armies. In this flight, the Bhonsle family also migrated to the south. For their livelihood the members adopted agriculture as their occupation. A village named Hingri in Patas district was inhabitated by them. Mudhoji Bhonsle and Rupaji Bhonsle accepted the post of Patel and collected the revenue of that pargana. They also engaged themselves in trade.

The Gazetteer of India gives another version about the origin of the Bhonsles. The Bhonsle family is included among the royal or Kshatriya clans of the Marathas. The Bhonsle House to which Chhatrapati Shivaji, the founuer of Maratha Kingdom, belonged hailed from Verul near Daultabad. The Bhonsles of Nagpur are known as Hingrikar as one of their ancestors, who was probably a contemporary of Maloji, the grandfather of Chhatrapati Shivaji, rehabilitated the village of Beredi, near Hingani, in the present district of Poona. The two brothers, Mudhoji and Rupaji, of Hingani Beredi were contemporarire of Shahji Bhonsle, the father of Shivaji. Like the Chhatrapati of the Bhonsle House, the Nagpur Bhonsle family also regarded themselves as having descended from the Sisodia Rajputs of Chittor. It is quite possible that some members of the Rajput clans might have come down to the Maratha country from the north during the long ascendancy of the Muslims. But it is also a historical fact that there were some Kshatriya families in the Maratha country like Rashtrakuts, the Chaulkayans and the Yadavas, who had no relationship with the Rajputs of the north.

There are some names in family tree in the Bakhar of the

Bhonsles of Nagpur which are common to this house and also to the House of the Chhatrapati seem to belong to the same Kshatriya clan. There is, however, no independent historical evidence to establish common ancestory between the two families in the few generations preceding Chhatrapati Shivaji. The account in the Bakhar of the Bhonsles of Nagpur, therefore, can only be accepted with a pinch of salt.

In the biography of Chhatrapati Sambhaji by Malhar Ramrao Chitnis, it is stated that after the death of Shivaji, his last rites were performed by Sabaji Bhonsle, as Sambhaji, the eldest son, was in confinement in the fort of Panhala. But Grant Duff writes that Shivaji's funeral rites were performed by one 'Shahjee Bhonsley'.(4) There is no unanimity among the writers of those days about the person who performed Shivaji's funeral rites. If, however, Sabaji Bhonsle performed the obsequies, there is every possibility that this Bhonsle, the ancestor of the famous Raghuji Bhonsle of Nagpur was a known blood relation of the Chhatrapati. At the time of Shahu Chhatrapati's homecoming when Tarabai and her partisons purposely cast doubt about Shahu being the grandson of Shivaji, it was parsoji of the Nagpur Bhonsle House who dined with Shahu and dispelled the doubt. Then during the last years of Shahu's reign it was strongly rumoured that he would select an heir to the throne of Satara, from the Bhonsles of Nagpur as he had no son. Later, the English offered to place one of the Bhonsles of Nagpur on the throne of Satara. These facts suggest the possibility of a common ancestory for the Bhonsles of Satara and Nagpur, though direct

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4. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, p.243.

historical evidence is not yet available for establishing the facts.

According to Richard Jenkins, "The early history of the Nagpur branch of the Bhonsle family tribe is obscure. The present members of the family do not profess to trace their origin above Mudhoji, the great grand father of the founder of the Nagpur state; and their pretensions to a defined relationship with the first sovereigns of the Mehratta empire have either fallen into oblivion or were never seriously believed."(5)

C.U. Wills writes, "As members of the old Maratha military aristocracy dating from the time of Shivajee, his family enjoyed a higher social status than the chiefs of later date like Sindhia and Holkar. The latter again were creations of the Peshwa's power while the Nagpur Bhonsles owed their elevation to the Rajas of Satara and proclaimed the connection on their official seal."(6)

There was also some affinity between the two Bhonsles families, as is shown by their intermarriages and by the admitted suitability of members of the Nagpur family for adoption into that of Satara.(7) When the latter house sank into insignificance, under the

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5. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827, p.47.

6. Wills, C.U., op.cit., see sketch of 1811, p.9. The wording of the seal are, "This is the seal of Raghuji, the son of Bimbaji who flutters about the feet of the great Shahu Raja like the bee about the lotus."

7. The Nagpur Bhonsles, to strengthen their position, put forward claims, mainly based, it would seem, on all identity of their surname, to blood relationship with the house of Satara. Warren Hastings, writing in 1744 describes Sabaji Bhonsle as "descended from the ancient Rajas of Satara, "and was persuaded that Mudhoji Bhonsle had been adopted by Shahu Raja." Neither of these claims can be substantiated but the Nagpur Chief's jealousy of the Peshwa's power and position received a double stimulus from their

Peshwa's influence, the former naturally took the lead in fostering the traditional rivalry, of which maratha society shows traces to the present day, between the Brahmans and the Marathas, and this in turn disposed them to side with any movement hostile to the Peshwa which might redound to their own advantage.(8)

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fictitious interest in the Satara throne and from their natural hostility, as Marathas to a Brahman authority. These family pretensions provide the key to Nagpur politics in the 18th century and colour most of the negotiations of importance which that court persued with Calcutta, Poona and Hyderabad.

8. Wills, C.U., op.cit., pp.8-9.

Appendix - II

Genealogical Tree of the Bhonsles of Nagpur

Bimbaji I

Mudhoji I — Rupaji

Bapuji = Bayabai — Parsoji I* (Died about 1709 A.D.) — Sabaji I = Ramau

Bimbaji II = Kashibai — Santaji — Ranoji (or Sawai Santaji) — Kanhoji - II Sena Sahib (ousted about 1734) — Mayaji

Umravatikar (The original names of the Bhonsles)

Raghuji I (Sena Sahib III or Baba Saheb)

= Sakbarbai, Sulabai and 11 other wives. Death - 14th Feb. 1755.

Janoji (Sena Sahib IV)	Mudhoji II(.) (Appa Saheb)	Sabaji II (Nana Saheb)	Bimbaji II (Ata Saheb)
Death-21.5.1772	Senadhurandar	Death- 1755	Death- 7.12.1787
=	Death-19.5.1788	=	=
Daryabai	=	Sagunabai	Umabai(Sati) and Anandibai(Death-7.12.87)
	Chimabai and Kamaljabai		
Raghuji II (Sena Sahib V)	Khandoji	Vyankoji	Thakubai
Adopted by Janoji Death-1816	(Chimnaji Bapu) Adopted by Bimbaji	(Nana Saheb or Manya Bapu)	Nanloji Gujar
Parsoji II (Sena Sahib VI)	Death- 1789	Death- 1811	
Death- 1817		Mudhoji (Apa Saheb) (Busted -1818) Death-1840	

* - Supposed by the British to have been the brother of Shahu Raja of Satara.
(.)-Supposed by the British to have been adopted by Shahu Raja of Satara.
Mudhoji and Bimbaji were Raghuji's sons by his first wife Sulabai Mohite. This lady was the first cousin of Sagunabai Mohite, the youngest wife of Shahu Raja of Satara (Sketch of 1811, p.2 and local information). This

p.t.o.

This connection by marriage is the only authentic relationship known to have existed between the Nagpur and Satara Bhonsles. Duff states that Shahu married Raghuji I to the sister of one of his own wives of the Shirke family, "that Mudhoji and Sabaji were the two younger of Reghuji's four sons, though born of the elder wife and that they were nephews of the late Rani of Satara, Sakwarbai Shirke."

(Duff, G., op. cit. Vol.I, pp. 442 and 550)

APPENDIX - III

Bham - The Original Seat of the Bhonsles

There is a village named Bham in the district of Yeotmal. It is called the Raja's Bham. In the time of the Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, the villages of Bham and Umravati were given to the ancestors of the Bhonsles of Nagpur in Jagir. Later the Bhonsles split up into two branches. There are some ruins of old buildings even today in Umravati. After many generations the Jagirdars of Umravati went away leaving their home-country. At present their descendants are living at Nagpur and are known as Umravatikar Bhonsles. Their geneology shows their relationship with the Bhonsles of Nagpur. The fortress of the Bhonsles of Umravati was in old Umravati, but now-a-days a new Ramdasi Math has been established there.

We cannot say definitely when the Bham and Umravati villages were given to the Bhonsles in Jagir, although in Kalamb there is stone plate of Burhan Nizam Shah which is dated 1,000 Hijri year. Today that plate is about three hundred and forty five years old. The sanad should, therefore, be as old as that. Upto Kanhoji's time, three generations of Bhonsles had lived at Bham. When Shahu gave the right of collecting the Chauth and Sardeshmukh, taxes of Varhad and the title of Sena Sahib Subah to Kanhoji, he became an important person. He established there many military posts, and the village of Bham became more or less a small capital. While collecting the Chauth and Sardeshmukhi taxes in Varhad province, the army of Kanhoji

Bhonsle used to subject the neighbouring villages to much harassment. Kanhoji Bhonsle, therefore, himself gave the 'Abhayapatra' (a letter of assurance) to the Brahmins of Nalagaon. The letter is undated, but there is the seal and the words " बहुत मान लिहिजे हे विनंती " in his own handwriting. The letter reads "you had requested at Sangam Mauje that you were leaving your place due to the fear of my army, therefore, I am giving you this letter of assurance. All able and dutiful Brahmins are being given this 'Abhayapatra' for the enjoyment of all facilities and for a happy living. Now you should not worry for anything. You can perform your religious duties fearlessly and do not fear my army."

Kanhoji Bhonsle had no children. Therefore, he treated Raghuji as his own son and kept him with him at Bham. Raghuji spent his childhood there. But when Kanhoji Bhonsle was blessed with a son, his love for Raghuji diminished. Therefore, Raghuji went away to Satara. There he showed his valour by saving the life of Shahu in a hunting expedition. Pleased with this act, Shahu gave one of his sister-in-law in marriage to Raghuji. Giving him the title of Sena-Sahib Subah, he sent him to Varhad. For sometime Raghuji stayed at Bham after receiving the title of Sena Sahib Subah. He brought his military post from Bham to Kalamb. From there he conquered the Gond kingdoms of Chanda and Devgarh and made Nagpur his headquarter. The Bhonsles of Nagpur made Varhad the main centre of their activity.

On the north-western side of the village Bham is a temple of Shri Shankar and a statue of Maruti. It seems that formerly Shri Shankar was the presiding deity of the Bhonsle family, because we find the words 'Shri Shankar' written on the top of the letters.(1)

1.Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Vol.IX, No.III, Shak 1850. This article is written by Shri Y.K.Deshpande.

APPENDIX IV

The Family of Ramaji Narain Kolhatkar

In tehsil Wai there is a village called Pandavgarh, which belonged to one Ramaji Narain Kolhatkar. Kolhatkar originally belonged to village Nevren in Konkan. He was the Deshmukh of that village, and as such he used to go to Nevren off and on. On the bank of river Koyana there is a place called Bhairavgarh. The Bhonsle family used to live there, one member of which was Bapuji, another was Parsoji, and a third was Sabaji Bhonsle. These three brothers and their families lived at Bhairavgarh and in the neighbouring villages. While returning from the Konkan Ramaji Kolhatkar used to break his journey for a while at Bhairavgarh. The Bhonsles used to receive him cordially and accorded him warm hospitality. In this way the Kolhatkar and the Bhonsles became very close friends.

Once the Siddis of Janjira treacherously attacked the Bhonsles, looted their home and village and carried them as prisoners to their capital. When Ramaji Kolhatkar came to know about it he personally went to the Siddis for their release. The Siddis demanded three thousand rupees as ransom. Kolhatkar collected the money by disposing of all his belongings. He brought all members of the Bhonsle family to Pandavgarh. On the slope of Pandavgarh, Kolhatkar built a house for the Bhonsles and settled them there. He supported this family from his Deshmukh watan and in this way these two families became very sincere friends. The Bhonsles appointed Ramaji Kolhatkar as their Upadhayaya.

Bapuji Bhonsle had a son named Bimbaji. His wife was sick and

so Bimbaji was very much upset. Bimbaji went to Ramaji Pant and became his disciple along with his wife. Ramaji Pant Kolhatkar gave him a metal statue of Ramchandra and asked him to worship it. That statue was installed at Devgarh. Bimbaji's wife used to get 'Charnamrit', and 'Prasad', daily as she was asked to do so by Ramaji Kolhatkar. He prayed to God Ramchandra and said, "If Bimbaji's wife gets a male child, he will bear Raghunath Swami's name." Bimbaji's wife was blessed with a son in Fasli Year 1107 (1698 A.D.). The child was named Raghuji.

When Shahu returned to Satara on his release from the Mughal camp, Ramaji Kolhatkar went to see him with his son, Konhar Ram and the Bhonsles. Even as a child Konher Ram was very handsome, smart and elegant. There was one Vittal Kanho Thoral in Shahu's camp. Thoral married his daughter to Konher Ram. Shahu took personal interest in it and treated Konher Ram as his own son-in-law. After this Konher Ram, along with Raghuji, used to visit the King off and on. Konher Ram was anxious to see Baba Saheb Bhonsle alias Raghuji Bhonsle rising to a high position. Konher Ram's conviction was that Raghuji was the favourite child of God. Thus Konher Ram introduced Raghuji to Shahu's courtiers and brought him also to the notice of the King. Once Konher Ram told Shahu that Raghuji was the son of his sister-in-law. Thereupon, Shahu began to take more interest in Raghuji, Parsoji Bhonsle's son, Kanhoji Bhonsle had been appointed as Sena Sahib Subah and had been deputed to work in Varhad. Kanhoji Bhonsle was not a good administrator and Shahu was not satisfied with his work. Some one was needed to replace him. The Chitnis suggested the name of Raghuji. Shahu, however, feared that if the uncle and

the nephew united, the situation would become very serious. Konher Ram Kolhatkar assured Shahu that this would not happen if Raghuji were given a Jagir. Accordingly village Deor was given to Raghuji and his descendants.(1) He wasalso honoured with the office of Sena Sahib Subah and along with Konker Ram he was asked to proceed to Berar. Shahu also ordered that Konher Ram should get Mujamu (some tax) from Raghuji's estate. This was a kind of reward given to Konher Ram whom Shahu regarded as his own son-in-law. At the time of Konher Ram's marriage Shahu could not give anything to him so he fulfilled his desire in this way, Raghuji also agreed to this proposal. Raghuji and Konher Ram came to Berar, arrested Konhoji Bhonsle, and returned to Satara with him as their prisoner.

In Fasli year 1132, Shahu entrusted the task of extending Maratha influence towards the east to Raghuji. Konher Ram was appointed his Dewan and Bhaskar Ram his Senapati. A new Chitnis was given, so also a new Phadnis. On reaching Deor in Berar Konher Ram transferred his 'Upadhyayivriti' to one Bhikam Bhat Joshi. Bhaskar Ram was treacherously killed while invading Bengal. His elder brother Konher Pant Kolhatkar was grief stricken. Raghuji Bhonsle gave him a Sanad(2) carrying an yearly income of rupees twentyfive thousand and also some capital for doing banking business. Bhaskar Ram's wife Taibai was given a new Sanad known as 'Sathyaleece'. A portion of the Jagir was allotted for this purpose and an adminis-

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1. This village is six Kos or twelve miles away from Satara and was a Mokasa village for Raghuji.

2. This Sanad was handed over to him in Fasli year 1161, Shak 1673.

trator was appointed. His name was Krishnaji Govind. Due to extreme grief Konher Ram requested Raghuji to relieve him of his duties. Raghuji tried his best to pacify him, but in vain, and at last Raghuji granted permission to Kohner Ram to go to his native land, and gave a Sanad in the name of Konher Pant's four sons, out of six, named Baburao, Govindrao, Laxmanrao and Balwantrao. The names of other remaining two sons who had been left out were Ramchandra and Yeshwant Kohlatkar. Baburao Kohlatkar took the charge of his estate and stayed at Nagpur with Raghuji. The other three returned to their native village. Baburao proved to be a worthy commander and fought many battles. Raghuji was very much pleased with him and Baburao became his trusted lieutenant. Meanwhile, Raghuji fell ill. He treated Baburao as his own son and disclosed all the secrets of administration and other things and asked Baburao to be with him twenty four hours. Baburao used to attend on him. Janoji Bhonsle was also there. Both Janoji and Baburao worked together. In shak 1163 Raghuji died and his thirteen wives became 'Sati'. His 'Chavarsha ' (flywisks), having golden handles, were given to Baburao and Janoji. This was done according to Raghuji's will. Janoji became Sena Sahib Subah and Baburao became his Dewan. But all of a sudden Baburao decided to go to his native village.

In the absence of Baburao, Janoji and Mudhoji began to quarrel among themselves. Then the Peshwa interfered. Janoji was declared Sena Sahib Subah and Mudhoji was given a new title that of Sena Dhurander. By this arrangement everything was set right. Both had wanted that Baburao would come back and look after the official work, but due to ill health,Baburao could not return.(3)

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3. Aitihasik Patravavavahar-, No.434..

APPENDIX - V

In addition to those mentioned earlier many other reasons have also been given for the removal of Kanhoji Bhonsle, the Sena Sahib Subah. From several documents it can be inferred that the regime of Kanhoji, the Sena Sahib Subah, was oppressive and high-handed and it was equally pre-judicial to the interest of the Maratha Kingdom and to the subjects. All these causes led Shahu to order the removal of Kanhoji from office and his ultimate arrest. The following throw light on his work and conduct:-

1. Abhayapatra- a letter of assurance by Kanhoji himself to the Brahmins of Telegaon Dasasar in Berar. It was recovered from a Brahmin family of that place. Kanhoji's army oppressed the people and hence the assurance.

2. His army was available on payment to work in the internal disputes of third parties.

3. Three orders in original issued by State from Satara to Kanhoji were secured through late Justice Keshaorao, of Hyderabad Court, from the descendants of Dharamji and Chavtaji's Deokhate, in whose favour, the orders had been issued. The first two documents are dated the 54th year and the last one the 58th year of the Coronation of Shivaji. The first records the complaint that the army of Kanhoji ravaged the territory of Dharamaji Deokhate, Mokasdar. The second records that Kanjoji forcibly recovered the Mokasa dues from the territories under the jurisdiction of other Sardars. The third contains an order to the effect that he should not molest the Mokasa territories in other people's jurisdiction and his army should

not enter their territories and should not devastate them.

4. A Maratha ballad compiled in about 1802 A.D. says that Kanhoji ill-treated and insulted Malkaji, a Mehar saint who cursed him saying that he would lose his office and his family would be extinct.

5. Two rolls of Persian documents were recovered from the records of the Jagirdar and the Deshmukh of Parwa in Berar. These are the statements of one Dhumaji Deshmukh. These are dated Fasli year 1143 and Fasli year 1146 respectively i.e., 1731 A.D. and 1734 A.D. Dhumaji was a big zamindar of Berar. He used to pay his dues regularly to Kanhoji's army. On occasions the zamindar himself was not spared. His strongholds were seized by Kanhoji's man, and he was arrested. He paid rupees twenty thousand as ransom for his release to Kanhoji who did not keep his word and failed to set him free.

Several complaints were received by Shahu about his cruelty and high handedness. Kanhoji had already incurred the displeasure of Shahu by showing disobedience to his orders. He was, therefore, removed and Raghuji was appointed in his place. Kanhoji was taken prisoner and was sent to Satara where he remained in Shahu's custody for three years and died a prisoner. Dhumaji was released and his property was handed over to him.

Kanhoji's son, Rayaji, was reconciled to Shahu and Raghuji. He had his headquarters at Bham and held some Mokasas in Berar from Shahu. He died without any issue and thus the family of Kanhoji became extinct.(1)

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1. Indian Historical Records Commission- Vol. 24-pp.82-84.

APPENDIX - VI

The Nature of Gond Kingdoms

The outlying territories of the Gond Rajas seem to have been distributed among feudatory chiefs, who paid a trifling revenue but bound themselves to attend upon the prince at his capital with a stipulated number of troops whenever their services were required. The group of semi-barbaric chieftains and their retainers, who constituted the fighting strength of a Gond state, possessed only an insignificant power of resistance to anything approaching the character of an organised force. The existence of the Mohammedan empire probably contributed to their stability. The Mughal from his distant court at Agra was content with obtaining from the lords of these rugged hills the nominal submission which was sufficient to prevent any break in the continuity of his vast dominions. But when on the ruins of the empire arose the Maratha and Bundela powers who knew no such forbearance, the Gonds succumbed to their blows almost without a struggle.

There were inroads of Marathas and Mohammedans during this period, we find from old revenue papers that Chanda and Devgarh (above the ghats north of Nagpur) were both included in the Subah of Berar; tribute was collected from the zamindars of those tracts ,i.e. the Gond Rajas, and carried to the treasury at Aurangabad. Bakhat Buland, the Devgarh Raja embraced Islam to obtain Aurangzeb's support, though he afterwards took advantage of the Emperor's distress to ravage all the country on both sides of the Wardha, while Chanda took off its tributory yoke availing of the same opportunity.(1) Duff

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1. Lyall, A.C.,Berar Gazetteer, p.121;

calls it "partial conquest in Gondwana", by Kanhoji Bhonsle, Sena Sahib Subah.(2) Sir R. Jenkins also tell us that during Chand Sultan's reign the Chanda was levied by Kanhoji Bhonsle and other Maratha officers.(3)

As early as in 1699, Rajaram beseiged Berar and succeeded in enlisting the aid of Bakhat Buland, the Gond Raja of Devgarh. In 1704, the Marathas were again active in Berar. Towards the end of 1707, Zul-Fikar Khan Nusrat Jang was the Viceroy of the whole Deccan and it was now that the officers of the imperial army, first began to enter into regular agreements with the Marathas for the payment of the black mail known as Chauth and Sardeshmukhi. The Nizam of Hyderabad also marched upon Devgarh in 1732 for the purpose of realising tribute from Chand Sultan. In 1738, Raghuji took advantage of the absence of Asaf Jah in Delhi to invade Berar. He defeated and slew Shujayat Khan, the Subedar in the neighbourhood of Ellichpur. It is probably at this time that the fortresses of Gawilgarh and Narnala passed into his possession.(4)

The first invasion of Bundelkhand by the forces of the Peshwa took place in 1733, and two years afterwards commenced the rule of the Maratha Pandits of Sagaur.

In 1742, the Peshwa advanced to Mandla and exacted the tribute of chauth amounting to four lakh of rupees. From this time

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2. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.378 and 442.
3. Jenkins, R., Report of 1827 - p.47.
4. Amraoti Gazetteer- pp. 87-91.

the Mandla kingdom lay at the mercy of the Marathas, by whom it was finally extinguished in 1751, after a duration of three centuries from time of Sangram Shah.(5)

The rulers of the Gond States, who were formerly a ruling race, were subjugated by the Marathas in the 18th century, and the Gonds were driven to take refuge in the inaccessible highlands, when the Marathas continued to pillage and harass them untill they obtained an acknowledgement of their supremacy and the promise of an annual tribute. Under such treatment the hill Gonds soon lost every vestige of civilisation and became the cruel treacherous savages depicted by travellers of this period.(6)

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5. Russell, R.V.; Central Provinces Gazetteer- pp.16-17.

6. Russell, R.V.; op.cit., p.159.

APPENDIX - VII

A sketch of the History of the Nagpur Branch of the Bhonsle family - By George Forester - Resident at Nagpur dated 11th April, 1788.

It appears that Kanhoji about seventy years ago (1720, when the Maratha Estate after the death of Aurangzeb assumed independence and power) under the sanction of Shahu laid the Gondwana (this extensive territory, which before the Maratha conquest contained two distinct principalities Garha-Mandla and Devgarh) and Berar countries under occasional contribution and resided commonly in the fort and district of Bham. A brother of Kanhoji, Santaji, disgusted at the oppressive conduct of this chief, left him and entered into the service of Bakhat Buland (This prince resided at Devgarh) of Devgarh division of Gondwana, by whom he was raised to great honour and power. Kanhoji on some pretence, having invaded the Gondwana was defeated by Bakhat Buland, who in that service received a distinguished personal aid from Santaji. When the intelligence of this event reached Satara, Shahu, having been displeased at Kanhoji's irregular remission of the Gondwana tribute, expressed his approbation and permitted Raghuji, a nephew of Santaji, desirous of partaking of his relation's good fortune to proceed to Devgarh, where Bakhat Buland gave him an employment in his army and apprised of the young man's connection with Santaji, charged Chand Sultan, the princes's eldest son, with the special care of his advancement. Bakhat Buland supplied Raghuji, then about fifteen years of age, with a sum of money to enable him to conclude a marriage with a sister of Shahu Raja, for which purpose

he went to Satara (original seat of the Maratha government, but during Peshwas, it was removed to Poona), where he remained until the death of Bakhat Buland. Kanhoji, his uncle, hearing of this event invaded Gondwana. Raghuji was directed by Shahu, who conferred on him the title of Sena Sahib Subah, to raise an army and reduce the power of Kanhoji who had accordingly attacked and having totally routed his forces, took him prisoner and conducted him to Satara. About this period Chand Sultan died and was succeeded by his son, Mir Bahadur, whom Walishah, an uncle of this prince, rebelled against and put to death. Raghuji, then engaged in an expedition in the Carnatic, was privately solicited by the widow of Chand Sultan and a party. She had formed to place Akbar Shah another of her sons, in the government, and for this service an ample reward would be bestowed on him. Raghuji assenting to the requisition, proceeded into the Gondwana where he was opposed by Wali Shah's Dewan, whom Raghuji defeated and took prisoner in the field. A negotiation was entered into between them specifying that a fourth of the whole revenue should be given upto the Maratha Chief and the Dewan assured him that if Wali Shah did not acquiesce in the treaty, he might enter the country the following year and levy contributions at pleasure. In the course of the next year it appeared that Raghuji again entered the territories of Walishah, who had refused to ratify the Dewan's treaty, and after various success subdued this prince, who with his son falling into the hands of the conqueror, Akbar Shah, the son of Chand Sultan, was invested in the government. Raghuji, plading agents in Nagpur (founded by the father of Bakhat Buland about 100 years ago), for collecting a certain amount of the Gondwana revenue which had been granted for the services he had performed, returned

to Satara. Raghuji, who held an important station in the service of Shahu Raja, had also from his military successes been enabled to maintain an independent and numerous body of horse with which he made himself formidable in the Southern Parts of India and in the province of Bengal. In the space of a few years subsequent to this revolution, Raghuji being offered a large donation by parties discontented with the governing prince to displace or cut him off and confer the country on his brother Burhan Shah, the Maratha Chief adopted the measure and expelled Akbar Shah, who after making some fruitless attempts to recover his former possessions, took refuge in the dominions of the Nizam of the Deccan where he died. Raghuji soon after this occurrence established an unparticipated authority in all the territories which had been held bythe family of Burhan Shah, whom investing with a revenue for his subsistance be deprived of all executive power. Raghuji removed the seat of government from Devgarh to Nagpur, which he surrounded with a wall (of little strength) and after a term of 38 years, in which with a renowned military reputation he swayed and actually governed a great part of the Gondwana. He also subdued Cuttack and fixed the Berar tribute. He died about the year 1758 (correct date is 1755) at Nagpur leaving four sons- Janoji, the eldest succeeded to the supreme possession of the territories, certain portions of which were allotted to the maintenance of his brothers.

APPENDIX - VIII

The End of Chanda Saheb

Manaji had written a letter to Chhatrapati Sambhaji of Kolhapur. The letter is undated, but from its contents it becomes obvious that it was purposely written to give the news of Chanda Saheb's death. The letter is as follows:-

"Your Highness knows", writes Manaji, "What troubles were caused to this kingdom i.e. Tanjore, by Chanda Saheb. He wished to take first the fortress of Trichinopoly and then the kingdoms of Tanjore and Mysore. With this aim in view he enlisted the support of the French at Pondicherry and beseiged Trichinopoly. With the help of a large army and powerful artillery Muhammad Ali, then at Trichinopoly, won over the support of the English. The Mysoreans and MurarRao Ghorpade also came to help him. Many Palegahs too joined him. I was ordered by my master (King of Tanjore) to succour him. We all collected our armies together and encircled Chanda's forces. We succeeded so well in cutting off his supplies and harassing his men that they got tired of their job. Alam Khan, their Pathan leader, was killed in action. Their soldiers deserted in large numbers. Realising the difficulty of continuing the Raja of Trichinopoly, Chanda Saheb along with the French and Achumdi Khan, the brother of Muzaffar Khan, retired towards the temple of Srirang Jambu-Keshwar and took refuge in it. This temple is a fairly strong place. So we beseiged it, and cut off all its communications. Chanda Saheb then

decided to escape and with that evil intention took the road which passed along my camp. He then paid the wages of sins and was put to death. (1) The crisis that had arisen are over. Chanda Saheb was an evil genius, an enemy of the Hindu religion and a most sinful man. His destruction brings relief to all."

The first report of the news as sent to by Clive and Lawrence, both of them say that Chanda Saheb was taken prisoner.(2)

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1. The original Marathi sentence reads as follows:
   " ચંદાસાહેબ નિચુન જીવમાન કુકુડીને નિમલા તો સમઈ સેવકા-
   ડીંલા મોમાસહેબ માઝે દેઉન સકુલકુકુલેઉન માઝલાડલા."
2. This is an article written by Dr. A.G.Pawar, published in Indian Historical Records Commission, Vol. 21, p.1.

APPENDIX - IX.

Janoji was sent to Cuttack to invade Bengal. That province had been free from the Marathas for a whole year, but they now returned with a keener desire to possess themselves of its resources and the Nawab Aliwardi Khan seeing no alternatives, ceded to them in 1750, the whole province of Orissa as far north as Balasore. Twelve lakh of rupees in lieu of further claims was the amount which was settled as the Chauth of Bengal and Bihar, but the reason of Raghuji's accepting a sum so inadequate is found in the events which were passing in the Deccan.

Muhammad Riza Khan stated that two treaties were concluded in the subject; one between Aliwardi Khan and the other between Jafar Ali Khan and Janoji. It was well known that the Subah was formerly not dependent on the Marathas. Aliwardi Khan and the Marathas at last concluded a peace, through the means of Mir Habib with their Chief Raghuji and a Chauth of twelve lakh of rupees was agreed upon for Subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Through Raghuji's intercession, Mir Habib was appointed the Naib of Cuttack. But a misunderstanding arose between Mir Habib and Janoji and the consequence was that Mir Habib was killed and Janoji recalled. But the treaty that was concluded between Aliwardi Khan and Raghuji held good and the peace was rendered invalid because of this step. Muslihuddin Muhammad Khan who had negotiated the affair of the Chauth, and was a friend of Mir Habib, was appointed Naib to Muhammad Khan Shahamat Jung, Subahdar of Orissa. But due to certain reasons, he left Cuttack and took refuge with Raghuji at Nagpur, but

was not countenanced by the Raja. He returned from Deccan to Banaras and from thence proceeded to Murshidabad. His son who had been appointed Naib of Cuttack, was then taken prisoner by the Marathas, and the peace by this step remained no longer valid.

But Muslihuddin Muhammad Khan consented to pay four lakh of rupees more besides the stipulated sum of twelve lakhs. Having understood that the Nawab Aliwardi Khan was displeased with him, he wanted to come into the good graces of Raghuji, and consequently, consented to pay him four lakh of rupees. He promised to the Bhonsle to increase the Chauth by four lakh of rupees in order to get his appointment approved by the Bhonsle. Aliwardi Khan was gradually losing all his power and influence and naturally the Mirza regarded himself as a servant of Raghuji rather than of the Nawab. It was also decided that whoever succeeded him, would pay the same amount of money to Raghuji. When the Nawab Aliwardi Khan discovered that intrigue, he was greatly offended with him, and asked him to pay the money by himself. Also, he sent another person to Cuttack in his place. Following are the particulars of the treaty:-

The Treaty under the seal of Raghuji delivered to Nawab Aliwardi Khan invoking and calling to witness Sri Sadu Sheo, Khande Rao, Jagannath, the holy waters of the Ganges and Belbhandar, he says as follows:- "I agree together with my sons Janoji and Manuji to enter into a firm alliance with Nawab Mahabat Jang and his successors Shahamat Jang and Sirajuddaulah, to be faithful to them till the last breath of our lives and to consider their friends and foes as ours. On condition of the peace, I am to receive twelve lakh of rupees

yearly including everything, the payments to be made agreeably to the statement drawn up.

Neither I nor any of my posterity, nor other potent sardars in alliance with me shall remain in these three subhas dependent on Nawab Aliwardi Khan or in any way molest the zamindars or have any concern with them.

Ramraja who has settled the Chauth of the aforementioned Subhas on me, shall not send any other Sardars into those quarters.

If, which God may forbid, the Nawab should at any time be engaged in war and want assistance, I will either repair to him myself or send one of my children with whatever number of troops the Nawab should ask for; and from the time of their arrival till the time he thinks proper to dismiss them, he will give them as much money as is necessary for their subsistance, and they are to demand no more.

When they are dismissed, they shall without delay return home and not oppress the ryots of those subahs when going and coming."

The treaty under the seal of Nawab Aliwardi Khan delivered to Raghuji, After invoking and calling to witness, the Prophet of God, he says as follows:-

I swear by the Quran that I, Aliwardi Khan, have agreed with the Maharaja Chhatrapati Ramraja to pay the Chauth for the Subhas of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; and in conjunction with Shahamat Jang, Saulat Jang and Sirajuddaulah, I likewise swear by the Holy Quran that we will enter into a firm alliance with Raghuji and his posterity and consider his friends and foes as ours.

And I agree from the 18th day of the month Asin of the Bengali era 1157, answering to the 9th day of the month Zul-Qad in the 4th year of the reign of Ahmad Shah to pay annually the sum of twelve lakh of rupees on account of the Chauth for the subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, to be remitted in two instalments every six months to Banaras either through Jagat Seth or the Maharaja Sarup Chand, as he (Raghuji) shall judge proper; on this condition that neither Raghuji nor his posterity nor any Mahratta , nor any other chief in alliance with him shall remain in or enter these subahs.

Nor shall they in any manner molest or have any concerns with the zamindars thereof.

And if, which God forbid, I should be engaged in war, he shall assist me. If he comes himself, it will be better, if not, he shall send one of his children with whatever number of troops I shall want, and from the day of their arrival so long as I entertain them, I will give each sepoy a rupee a day for his maintenance. They are to be satisfied therewith and are not to demand any more. And when I dismiss them, they shall without delay return home and not molest the rayots of these provinces in coming and going.

The treaty under the seal of Raja Janoji delivered to ask the Nawab Jafar Ali Khan to the same effect as the foregoing, adding that whatever treaties were agreed upon by his father Raghuji and Nawab Aliwardi Khan, he shall solemnly observe and abide by."(1)

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1. Calendar of Persian correspondence, Vol.II, pp.330-332.

The original copy of this treaty is not available anywhere in Nagpur Bhonsle's papers or Bakhar. It may have been destroyed, among other papers, by Mir Kasim of Bengal. Durlabhram had got the true copy of the treaty which took place between Janoji and Mir Jafar, and Janoji and Mir Jafar had the same terms of treaty which took place between Raghuji and Aliwardi Khan. This treaty is of the year 1752. This is not known whether any changes were made in the treaty, but it is definite that twelve lakh of rupees were fixed in lieu of the three provinces. But later on when the Marathas occupied Katak, what was decided is not known. According to the original treaty, the Marathas had no right to ask for Chauthai; when they had occupied a province, but it is true that the Nawab used to send twelve lakh of rupees in spite of the fact that the Marathas had occupied Orissa. The Nawab had not signed this treaty willingly. It is clear that the Nawab had got the right to make changes in the treaty if its conditions were broken by the other party through attacks etc. But in spite of the occupation of Orissa by Janoji, Aliwardi Khan, Sirajuddaullah and later on Mir Jafar gave twelve lakh of rupees annually without any grumbling.

When Janoji succeeded Raghuji, he renewed his demand for the Chauth from the English, who had come in power in Bengal. But the Vakil of the Company Mir Zainul Abidin contended that the old treaty concluded between Aliwardi Khan and Raghuji provided that twelve lakh of rupees were to be paid to the Raja of Nagpur as the Chauth of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and so if the Marathas wanted the stipulated Chauth, they were bound by the treaty itself to return Orissa

to the Subedar of Bengal.(2) But the Raja vehemently objected to this interpretation and maintained that the stipulated amount was payable to him only on account of Bengal and Bihar.(3) But this stipulated tribute had not been paid by the Company and rent had been in arrears for some years, and this gave Sheo Bhat Sathe, the Subedar of Orissa, an excuse for invading Bengal.(4)

Motte also writes that Bhawani Pandit, the Governor of Orissa explained to him the justice for the demand, Janoji, his master had on the Company for the arrears of the tribute of Bengal and Bihar.(5)

This shows that the Marathas had always demanded the money of Chauth from the English, but the latter had always refused to pay the same.

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2. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol.II, introduction,p.XIX.
3. Ibid., p.195.
4. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol.III, introduction,p.IX.
5. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.17.

APPENDIX -X

Jagannath temple and Pilgrim tax

Bahadur Khan writes to the Sevakas of the Jagannath temple at Puri that they would carry out the worship of the God regularly. The maintenance of the regular worship of the Jagannath at Puri had a financial aspect of the administration of Orissa in those days. Extracts from Riyaz-us-Salatin establish the importance of Jagannath temple of the then Government:-

"During the commotion of Mohammed Taqi Khan's time, the Raja of Parsuttam or Puri and removed Jagannath the Hindu God from the limits of the Subah of Odisah and had it on the summit of a hill across the Chilka lake. In consequence of the removal of the idol, there was a falling of to the tune of many lakh of rupees in the imperial revenue occurring from the pilgrims. Establishing friendly relations with Mir Habibullah Khan, and paying Nazar to the Nazim of the time, Rajah Daud (Ram Chandra) Deo brought back Jagannath, the Hindu God of Parsuttam (Puri) and re-established the worship of Jagannath at Puri. (Riyazus-Salatin, p.303).

Lest the Sevaks of the Jagannath temple would remove the idol of Jagannath out of fear of being attacked by the Marathas, Bahadur Khan informed them that there was no chance of attack of Orissa, that is the Jagannath of Orissa. It seems that Bahadur Khan was conscious of the loss of revenue under the head of pilgrim tax if the regular worship of Jagannath at Puri was disturbed.(1)

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1. I.H.R.C., Vol. 21; 1944, pp.117-118.

APPENDIX - XI

All the authorities, European or Indian on the Maratha invasion of Orissa and Bengal are silent about the route through which the Marathas of Nagpur entered Orissa and Bengal. A letter in Oriya,(1) provides definite information about Bahadur Khan having met Raghuji at Phuljhar from where they came to Belpada in Daspalla which is situated at the entrance of the Barmul Pass on the right bank of Mahanadi. From Balpada Raghuji came to Padamas after crossihg the

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1. The following is an exact manuscription in Roman of the letter in Oriya:-

   Viva - Kisora devamkara mina 18 dine siddha Sri Bahadur Khan jiumkare Sri Jagannath Mahaprabhumkara Samasta Seveka manamku Chitan Narasimharpura Simane Padamala tharu lakhibun Raja Raghujin Mira Habibula Khan Saheb ghodave aile Ambhe Phulajhari thore mulakat Kabu. Tamku Dasapplla Srima Balapada thore parakari Narsimhapura simara kari Bada-ambi Athagoda simare Shemi Kataka galun. Parameswaram ku Serya Karuthira. Ambhe ethare thivaru odisa Sera Hedaku najivara Jamira.

Translation: It is dated the 18th Mira of the reign of Virakisondeva is written by Bahadur Khan to all the Seveka (servants) of Jagannath Mahaprabhu at Puri from Padamal in Narsimhapur. Raja Raghuji and Mir Habibullah Khan came on horse back. I met them at Phuljihar and made them to cross the river Mahanadi at Belpada in Daspalla and I am on the way to Cuttack with them via Bade-Ambi in Athagarh. Please do regularly the worship of the God. As I am here, they will not enter Orissa.

(Shri P.Acharya, the writer of this letter in I.H.R.C. Vol.24,p.115, got the copy of this letter from Pandit Sribasta Misra Vidyalankar of Barambagarh. It was copied by Misra from the Palm leaf bundle No. 60, p.80, which is kept under the custody of Deulkaran Radhamohan Patnaik of Hadalapanji. The bundle relates to Raghuji's march to Orissa and Bengal in 1743.

Mahanadi and then proceeded via Narsingpur, Baramba, Tiginia and Athagarh, which are situated on the left bank of Mahanadi. He re-crossed Mahanadi at Cuttack. Raghuji arrived at Cuttack soon After Aliwardi Khan's departure for Bengal from Orissa. Aliwardi Khan followed the direct Badshahi road through which Motte travelled in 1766 from Jalesore to Cuttack.

Raghuji selected the direct route to Pachet (Manbhum) through the hilly tract of eastern Keonjhar, western Mayurbhanjh, Singhbhum and Manbhum districts, following the route which had been followed by Firoz Shah in 1360 as recorded in the Sirat-i-Firozshah.(2) Midnapur, Bishunpur and Burdwan can be easily reached from Panchakolu or Sikharbhum or Manbhum.

Dr. K. K. Datta writes that Raghuji marched into Bengal in February 1743 and as Raghuji first came to Orissa also in 1743, it is quite clear from this letter that he arrived at Padamal in Narsimhapur on the 30th or 31st of March, 1743.(3)

The Persian writers of the history of this period are silent about the route which brought Bhaskar Pant to Ramgut and Panchet from where he attacked Burdwan.

R.D.Bannerjee writes on the authority of Sier, "Bhaskar Pandit, the General of the Maratha army, entered Chhota Nagpur

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2. Datta, K.K.; Aliwardi and His Times - pp.58-59.

3. Ibid., p.82.

through Chhatisgarh and fell upon the Midnapur district through Mayur-bhanja and Panchet."(4) But on page 375-76 of Sier we find mention of sudden arrival of the Marathas in Ramgarh area from where they turned towards Panchet and Mayurbhanja and fell upon Midnapur. Bhaskar's entry into Ramgarh and Hazaribagh area from central provinces could only be possible through Sarguja State and Ranchi district and that is the reason which perhaps led Bannerjee to come to such an unusual conclusion.

Datta on the authority of Karam Ali and Yusuf Ali writes, "Bhaskar marched unopposed through Orissa, overpowered its deputy Governor Sheikh Masum Khan and made his Peshkar Durlabhram a captive. Then he proceeded through Panchet.(5)

As Bhaskar marched from Nagpur in the company of Mir Habibullah,(6) who was familiar with the routes of the Mahanadi valley, Dr. Datta's conclusion seems to be correct.

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4. Banerjee, R.D.,History of Orissa, Vol.II, p.91.
5. J.R.A.S.B., pp. 58-59.
6. Riyaz-us-Salatin, English translation, p.338.

APPENDIX - XII

There are some contemporary records to identify the boundary of Orissa ceded to the Marathas by Nawab Aliwardi by the treaty of peace of 1751. Uptil now no copy of the original treaty of 1951 has been published anywhere. From letters Nos. 1244-47 of the Correspondence of Persian Calendar, Vol.II, pp. 330-32, it appears that the treaties between the Nawab Aliwardi Khan and Raghuji were preserved at Murshidabad upto 1769, but these letters do not contain any clause on the boundary of the ceded portion of Orissa.

According to Siyar, the boundary was demarcated by "the river Sohamakia which runs by Bullisar Bender."(1)

English author Stewart writes in 1813 "the river Soonamookhy which runs by Balasore was considered as the boundary of two dominions."(2)

Duff writes- "Aliwardi Khan ceded whole of the province of Katack as far as Balsore."(3)

Maulvi Abdus Salam, the translator of Riyazus Salatin, writes in 1904- "The river Sunnamukhi near Jalesmar was the demarcation line of the boundaries of the Provinces of Orissa and Bengal."(4)

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1. Siyar, Mutakherin, Vol. II, p.113, published in 1870.
2. Stewart, History of Bengal, p.302.
3. Duff, Grant, op.cit., Vol. I, p.504.
4. Riyazus Salatin, p.362, Translated by Maulvi Abdus Salam.

Riyaz is silent about it.

R.D.Bannerjee writes - "From the Bakhar of the Bhonsle of Nagpur in which the river Subarna- rekha is given as the northern boundary of Orissa."(5)

"And from Siyar against it, the river Sonamukhia is perhaps a mistake for the Subarnarekha, which we find to be the southern boundary of Province of Bengal as soon as the East India Company had assumed the reigns of Government of Province." "As the Regulation I of 1793 mentions the Province of Orissa under the British Administration, the southern boundary of the Province of Bengal was on the north of the Midnapore District and so he was certainly wrong on this point."(6)

Dr. K.K.Datta has accepted the note of the translator of Riyaz.

The important point on the situation of the boundary of Orissa ceded to the Marathas by Aliwardi Khan is the situation of the Balasore town. Since there has not been any change in the position of Balasore town and Persian Ballisar cannot be a mistake of Jalisar. The boundary of the ceded Orissa must be searched for near Balasore and not at Jalaswar. There is a river called Sunai , shortened perhaps from Sunamukhi or Sunamukin, which joins Burabalanga river to a little west of Puladighat and this river was the boundary at the time of treaty of 1751, and not the Subarnrekha. From its mention in the

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5. Bannerjee, R.D., History of Orissa, Vol.II, p.110.

6. Ibid., p.118.

treaty of 1751, it seems that the Sunai was the main river. Rennel's Bengal Atlas-Sheet 7 (1779) shows that the "Soona River" is much wider than "Burabanlang River' and thus proves its importance.

In Rennel's map again, the boundary of the Maratha, Orissa is shown all along the bank of the Subarnrekha excluding a small portion on the west of Jallaswar where the boundary is shown on the right bank of the river, and this boundary line in the map has got nothing to do with the actual possessions of the Marathas and the British in 1779 or even earlier.(7)

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7. Acharya, P.; Mayurbhuj during the early Maratha and British occupation in Orissa, published in I.H.R.C., Vol. 19, Part I, 1942, pp. 153-154.

APPENDIX - XIII

MIR HABIB

In the retreat from Burdwan Mir Habib, an officer of Nawab Aliwardi Khan, had been captured by the enemy. This man at once transferred his services to them and proved their most useful ally and the greatest scourage of Bengal. His local knowledge, ability and persistence alone gave to the Maratha invasion of these three eastern provinces its long-drawn relentless and desolating character.

Mir Habib was a native of Shiraz in Persia. Emigrating to Hughli he at first earned a scanty living by hawking from house to house such goods as he could get on credit from the merchants of his own country settled at that port. Though an absolutely illiterate man, his ready wit, extreme suavity of speech and perfect command of the Persian language, soon enabled him to make his way into the highest circle of society. He discarded his original profession and blossomed forth into the chief confident and deputy of Rustam Jang, rising as his master rose in the service of successive Nawabs of Bengal. When Rustam Jang was appointed governor of Dacca, Habib by his attention to details and strict economy effected large savings in the expenditure of the government flotilla, artillery and military departments. At the same time he enriched his master by unauthorised encroachment on private trade and a predatory incursion into Tippera, till he was raised to the peerage. During Rustam Jang's governorship of Orissa, Habib as his agent ran the entire administration and distinguished himself by ably managing the public business keeping the zamindars under control and greatly increasing his master's income.

His ability and tireless activity were only equalled by his boundless ambition, implacable enmity to Aliwardi Khan and utter lack of moral scruple or generous sentiments.(1).

Mir Habib was not new to Orissa. He was there when Murshid Kuli Khan II was the Naib Nazim. Since 1742, when the Maratha invasion of this land began, Mir Habib had been exercising his authority over all the important matters of Orissa as the right hand man of Raghuji. Thus he had a frist hand knowledge of all the affairs of Orissa and now as the Naib Nazim of the province he wanted to make his administration a success.

During the Maratha compaigns into Bengal and Orissa, he acted as guide, friend and philosopher. In fact he was the Prime Minister of Bhaskar Pandit.(2) If Bhaskar Pandit would have listened to the good advice of Mir Habib, he would not have been killed.(3) In the Maratha invasion of 1745, there was a serious fight between Marathas and Aliwardi's soldiers, after which the Nawab's Begums proposed a treaty. Mir Habib could influence Raghuji to reject such a proposal. Raghuji was thus guided himself by the advice of Mir Habib.(4) When Raghuji left Bengal after his defeat, it was Mir Habib who remained in Bengal.(5) He occupied many places at the head of roving Maratha bands. Although he was occasionally defeated by Aliwardi Khan and

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1. Riyaz, op.cit., pp.299-303; Yusuf, op.cit.,p.41.
2. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.I, pp. 393-95.
3. Datta, K.K., Aliwardi and His Times, p.90.
4. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.12.
5. Ibid., p.14.

saved himself by retiring to the woody mountain tracts of Orissa, yet he did not lose courage. He continued to harass the Nawab Aliwardi Khan either by re-occupying many places in his absence or by occasionally meeting him in fresh engagements.(6)

By the time the treaty was made between the Nawab Aliwardi Khan and Raghuji, Mir Habib created such a ground that both parties were compelled to accept him as the Governor of Orissa. The Marathas chose him not only because he helped the Marathas in plundering Orissa and Bengal, but because the money which he promised to pay to Raghuji for utilising the Maratha soldiers had not yet been fully paid. Aliwardi Khan agreed to such appointment because the situation in Orissa was favourable for the appointment of any Muslim General except Mir Habib who would have made the matter still worse in this province.(7) A Maratha force under the command of a Maratha officer related to Raghuji was also stationed in Orissa under his control. He received from Bengal twelve lakh of rupees to be sent to Raghuji. He also promised to pay four lakh of rupees to the Marathas annually. (8) But unfortunately for Orissa and for Mir Habib when he was just beginning to consolidate his position, Raghuji sent his son Janoji as the commander of the Maratha army and his deputy in Orissa. But unfortunately he incurred the displeasure of Janoji, and was killed

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6. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, pp. 51, 56, 77,79. Letter to Court 22nd February, 1749; Consultations, 5th September, 1751.
7. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, pp.112-113.
8. Ibid., p.115; Select Committee Proceedings - 5th January 1768, p.653.

in 1752.

His murder was really unfortunate for the Maratha cause. He had proved himself a very good administrator and care-taker of the Maratha empire. Had he not been killed, the state of affairs of the province would have been different and the English could not have put their hold on Orissa so easily, and ultimately Janoji had to handover the province to the English. Thus as he sowed so he reaped. Leaving the cause of the Nawab Aliwardi Khan under whom he was serving, he invited the Marathas to raid Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and in these invasions he served faithfully the Bhonsles of Nagpur and put up their flag high in Orissa. But due to jealous nature and hot temper of Janoji, he was crushed down at the zenith of his power. Instead of serving any cause of the Marathas, his murder was a severe blow on the rising power of the Bhonsles of Nagpur in the eastern sector of the country. The Marathas had got the real control over Orissa only, and in Bengal and Bihar they had got the right of collecting Chauth only. By losing Orissa, they also lost the right of collecting chauth from Bengal and Bihar. The English refused to be bound by the Treaty of 1751.

Thus the murder of Mir Habib caused both immediate and far flung consequences, which were unforeseen by the Marathas. The Bhonsles could not avail of the services of such a faithful and efficient administrator for their own cause.

APPENDIX - XIV

Effects of Maratha invasions over Orissa and its General condition:

Politically the Maratha invasions produced many effects. These invasions kept the Nawab Aliwardi Khan occupied mainly with war with the Marathas, instigated sedition in his own affairs and weakened the government of Bengal, and thus gave time and scope and paved the way for the rise of the English in Bengal.

They created a sort of anarchical atmosphere in Orissa for about a decade. Of course, successive deputies were appointed by the Nawab to rule the country but they had neither time to look to the administration nor were fit to ward off the Marathas from Orissa. At this stage the feudal chiefs grew more powerful than before. The southern part of the country was more severely affected by the Maratha raids than the northern part, which was a parading ground not only for the Maratha soldiers but also for the Muslim army from Bengal who chased them. This period was over when a treaty was made between Raghuji and the Nawab Aliwardi Khan.

The treaty was given effect to in the year 1751 and thus, to all intents and purposes, Orissa became a Maratha province. For half a century more Orissa had to remain under the Maratha occupation. According to this treaty, the frontier of Bengal was fixed at the river Subarnarekha. Although in theory it was considered as demarcating line yet in actual practice it was not so. There were some Maratha territories on the north side of the river, the Bengal government had certain lands on the southern side of it.(1) Some of

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1. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. VIII, No.508.

them had estates on both British and Maratha territories, they paid revenue to the government of both the territories.(2)

There was a tendency towards shifting the population from the localities which were ravaged by the Marathas to so far places in this country; thus the balance of the population was disturbed.

The zamindars were generally involved in disturbances which took place owing to a variety of reasons. They sought protection from their own governments. Force was replied to by force. The governments supported their zamindars. Peace in the parganas on or near the border was occasionally disturbed owing to various reasons. One was related to land dispute, stealing of cattle, plundering of the territory of one zamindar by another zamindar. All these led to disturbances in the border and shelter was given by zamindars to the nobles. The imposition of duty on the people of one territory by the officers or zamindars of the other. They took shelter on the other side of the border to avoid punishment, payment of revenue and loan etc. They fled away from their respective territories.

With the advent of the Marathas in the country a new type of nobility developed. The class of people rose into prominence owing to the space and favour of the Maratha subedar. They strengthened the hold of the Maratha government over this country.(3)

The presence of the Marathas in Orissa affected the then

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2. Ibid., Vol.V, Nos. 505 and 506.

3. Ray, B.C.; Orissa under Marathas, p.72.

growing power of the English. The English men had been for more than a century in possession of factories and trading posts in Orissa.(4) The chief of these factories were at Balasore and Pipli on the Subarnarekha. The first entry in the government records is dated 25th of February, 1748 and records the alarm caused by the Marathas, who were then encamped at Katwa in Burdwan and were threatening Murshidabad. The Marathas were in great force in the Santhal Parganas and all over the lower Bengal and took a fort there. The Nawab sent a hint to the English to the effect that they should drive away those marauders who had plundered the company's fleet of boats laden with silk from Casimbazar. In August of the same year, Kelsall again writes from Balasore that the "Morattoes Horse" had attacked the factory of Balamgarhi at the mouth of the Balasore river, but had been repulsed by the Nawab who had persued them into Cuttack."(5)

In May 1749, when the Nawab was at Cuttack, the Marathas had fled, but were expected to return the next year, which they did under Janoji. There were still, however, parties of them hanging about Diamond Harbour and the lower reaches of the river. They seem to have given the English a wide berth. The Marathas were not bloodthirsty, their object was plunder, but of that they were insatiable. Too contemptuous of the Oriyens to take any great precautions, they seem to have wandered about in small bands, stripping the country bare as they went.(6)

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4. Selections from the Records of the Government of India, by Reveren J. Long, 1748, pp.6-7.
5. Stirling, Hunter and Sahu; A History of Orissa, p.304.
6. Ibid., pp. 304-305.

According to the Mughal-Maratha treaty concluded between the Nawab Aliwardi Khan and Raghuji Bhonsle, the position of Orissa as regards her administration was apparently this: at the top there was the Emperor of Delhi under whom there was the Nawab Aliwardi Khan of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and under the latter was Mir Habib, the Naib Nazim of Orissa. But in fact Ahmad Shah, the Emperor of Delhi, was a non-entity who commanded no allegiance from his Nawab, Aliwardi Khan. Similarly, although the Naib Nazim of Orissa was appointed formally by Aliwardi, the latter had no voice in the work of his subordinate, since the Naib Nazim Mir Habib was an agent of the Marathas. It was as clear as daylight that Orissa was now under the Maratha rule. From 1760 to 1803 governors were appointed direct from the court of Nagpur.(7)

In such a state of insecurity and anxiety, people were not always free to pursue their own profession of life. So economically during this time, there was to some extent a decline in trade, commerce, industries and agriculture in the country. In consequence of plunder, raid and various other disturbances, practised by the troublesome zamindars on the border, there was economic loss to the people in general. The trade of both the governments was seriously affected. Life and property of the people near the border was often insecure. Due to lack of natural barrier between these two territories, it was difficult to establish any effective police guards against the occurrence of such disturbances. This boundry problem ceased to exist only when the British con-

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7. Ray, B.C., op.cit., p.160.

quered Orissa in 1803.

The economic condition of Orissa deteriorated under the Marathas in comparison with the previous period. The income of Orissa from sale of salt in Bengal came to a stop except through smuggling. In 1750 with Janoji's return, matters grew worse and we find Kelsell reporting that, owing to the disturbances in the country, he could not "purchase any ready-made goods, as the weavers or greater part of them have been obliged to abscond."(8) Stirling would appear to be correct as to an invasion in 1753, for the Resident at Balasore writes from Balramgarhi on 1st February of that year in a very desponding tone - "Weavers at Balasore complain of the great scarcity of rice and provisions of all kinds occasioned by the devastation of the Marathas, who six hundred in number after plundering Balasore had gone to Nellegreen (Nilgiri) hills; several weavers have brought their looms into the factory, and the few who remain declare they shall be obliged to quit the place. Janoji desires, he will send him 1500 or 2,000 maunds of rice on the Honourable Company's account."(9) "The people of Balasore have no distinctly historical facts to relate of this period, all they know is, that bands of "Bargis" as the Maratha horse were called, were always wandering about the country, fighting and plundering under pretext of collecting revenue. The zamindars and Khemdaits were turbulent and violent, and it is astonish-

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8. Stirling, op.cit., p.305.

9. Ibid.

ing how little influence the Marathas seem to have had over them.(10)

In view of the character of the Maratha administration as stated above Stirling again remarks, "The administration of the Marathas was fatal to the welfare and prosperity of the country and exhibits a picture of misrule, anarchy, weakness and violence combined which makes one wonder how society can have kept together under so calamitous a tyranny."(11) This remark is found to be incorrect.

Early European travellers in the Nagpur territories also gave an account of the conditions prevailing in Orissa in those times. Motte writes, "Small Talukdars, who being oppressed by the Mehrattas, and in their turn oppressing their tenants, have almost made the country desolate. Indeed, the tenants of such talukdars as are above attending the agriculture themselves, are in general in a worse condition than those of the more considerable zamindars. I passed into the talook of Budruc, where I found deep marks of the Mehratta claws on the fine tract of land, formerly well peopled, where a human creature is not now to be seen, except perhaps, a solitary herdsman, attending a large drove of buffaloes or other horned cattle. Now it is the custom of the Mehratta troops to plunder as much in the zamindaries tributary to them as in any enemy's country; the tenants of such zamindaries, therefore,

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10. Stirling, op.cit., p.306.

11. Ray, B.C.; op.cit., p.165.

desert their villages at the approach of an army, while the Foujdar, meeting the commander with a present, obtains an order to be exempted from pillage, the execution of which he attends to himself, and, if any inferior officer commits violence, fails not to repel force by force."(12) "They grow no grain or pulse, but such as ripen in the rainy season. Such as ripen in the other months are entirely neglected, because the inhabitants expect the Mahrattas to overrun the country in those months."(13)

But Leckie who undertook journey to Nagpur by the way of Cuttack in 1790, writes, "Balasore was formerly a flourishing post, but their manufacturing of the Sanses (Sehun) clothes is very much fallen off, both in quantity and quality and the ruinous state of the English and Dutch factories. As we passed into the Marhatta territory, there was less appearance of cultivation and inhabitants." But Motte remarked that when he passed that place (the village of Simla and Goovindpoor and Badrue) in 1769, there was a manufacturing of fine clothes, nothing coarse was made.(14)

Their narratives also throw light on the general administration of Orissa by the Marathas. As Motte writes "Jallasore is a small town on the Shoobunreeka, bounding on the English territories to the southwards, while the Mehrattas kept a considerable

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12. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, pp. 5-12.

13. Ibid., p.27.

14. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

of which, as was the custom among all native prince, was irregularly distributed. He had two battalions of sepoys, armed and clothed like them, but they went through their exercise very badly, and he did not think they would be able to stand against any body of native sepoys, disciplined by European officers.

He had heard that the total collections of the Rajah's dominions, including Rattanpore and Cuttack, only amounted to seventy lakh of rupees per annum. He, however, did not pretend to affirm that that was exact, though he did not think that could much exceed that sum; for the Rajah's country not withstanding the great extent of the territory, did not contain proportionable quantity of cultivated land to that which was waste and occupied by forests.

"The Subahdar, as he is styled, Rajah Ram Pundit, is now at Nagpur, whither he is generally summoned once in two or three years, to give his account. His tenure is on the footing of that of a favour; he pays the Rajah of Nagpur ten lakh of rupees out of the collection, which are estimated at twenty two lakhs, including what is sent from Balasore; the remainder the Subahdar applies to his own use, the pay of the soldiers etc. He generally returns from Nagpore well pleased; for he is obliged to make considerable presents to retain his office."(17)

About the revenue system of Orissa he writes, "The ordinary revenues of the country are paid in kind, and the regulation of the collections is simple. Each village is being rated at a certain

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17. Ibid., pp. 55 and 73.

number of measures of paddy or rice, in the chaff, the ground is divided among the inhabitants in this manner. The extra-ordinary revenues consist of duties on merchants and others passing through the country and of lines. The government of Sumbhalpoor is strictly feudal, the fiefs of which being originally official one, by the weakness of the sovereign, became hereditary. Under the old Hindu government, the inhabitants of the hills were more warlike and of course claimed a superiority over the low land people. When they fell under the yoke of the Mahrattas, the oppression of that wide government broke their spirits".(18)

Leckie writes - "The government is directed by a Faujdar, a civil officer, having military authority, named Morah Pundit. He collects the revenue from Neelgurh, and remits it, together with the annual tribute from the Rajah of Mohu Bunj, in Cuttack. The road from Burma to Arckpore lies in a fine broad valley, but the cultivation of it appears to be in a neglected state, but when we consider the system of government of the native princes, which pays little regard to the ability of the cultivator, and the frequent introduction of rapacious soldiery, deserted villages and uncultivated plains became more matter for grief than surprise."(19)

There was very little circulation of gold and silver currency, and the rents were paid in cowries. Leckie had imagined that the greatest branches of the revenue were the customs and tax

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18. Ibid., pp. 37-39.

19. Ibid., pp.52-54.

upon the pilgrim's going to Jagannath. A bullock load of silk was taxed at six rupees. Pilgrims from the Deccan paid rupees six and those from Bengal, who were generally richer paid rupees ten. Cutlee was an extensive market. The merchants of the Deccan brought cotton and other articles, and those from Cuttack and the northern sircars, import sugar, tin, copper, salt and silk. The trade was all settled by a mutual barter.(20)

Captain J.T.Blunt also gives a narration of his journey in the territories of the Raja of Nagpur. He writes, "In Rattanpor the Maratha government being well established and the country highly cultivated, we met with civil treatment, and abundance of every species of grain. The insecurity attending the traveller in his property and person, throughout most of the native governments of India and the privilege allowed to the zamindars, of taxing the merchants who pass through their districts, is so discouraging to foreign trades, that they are rarely seen in the Mahratta territory.

"The Mahrattas keep their peasantry in the most object-state of dependence, by which means they allege the ryots are less liable to be turbulent, or offensive to the government. Coin is but sparingly circulated among them; they derive their habitation and subsistence from the labour of their own hands. Their troop who are chiefly composed of emigrants; from the northern and western parts of Hindostan, are quartered upon the tenantry, who in return for the accommodation and subsistence they offered them, required their

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20. Ibid., pp.56-58.

assistance, whenever it may be necessary, for collecting the revenues. It was one of the most productive provinces under the Barah Rajahs.

"The only road from Cuttack to Nagpur passes through Ryepur. The merchandise was cotton in (Bodachill), which the Mahrattas were exporting into the circars; in exchange for which commodity they usually import salt, coconuts into Chanda, Nagpur and other parts of Berar." (21)

About the geography and the administration of Nagpur state C.U. Wills writes, "Orissa and its dependencies consisted of the three modern districts of Bolasore, Cuttack and Puri, lying on the sea cost between the Subarnrekha river, dividing Orissa from the northern sarkars. Away from the coast-stretched a wild tract of country, known as the tributory Mahals of Orissa. The province was administered by the Nagpur Raja through an officer called Subedar. Orissa yielded according to Forester a revenue of seventeen lakh of rupees. But according to Leckie, it yielded ten lakh of rupees." (22)

Raghuji had made the petty zamindars independent of him and formed the chuklas of Dinkanot, Bombay, Narsingpoor, Tigoree, Tolchani, Chunda Parra, Dispulla, Hirdaa, Ungool and Boad.(23)

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21. Ibid., pp. 127-162.

22. Ibid., p.69.

23. Ibid., p.27.

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2. Aitihasik Patren Yadi Waghaire - It is a collection of 501 original letters which appeared from time to time in the now defunct Kavya Itihas Samgraha of late Rao Bahadur Kashinath Narayan Sane and puolished by S.N.Joshi- In editing these, Sane did his best but considering the haphazard growth of the series and the publication of each letter immediately as it came into his hands, it was only natural that he has given no dates to many letters and failed to identify the persons and interpret correctly events mentioned in some of them. A chronological arrangement of the papers was out of question in his publication. These were chronologically arranged and dated by Sardesai assisted by Y.M.Kale and V.S.Vakaskar. These two volumes Kavya Itihas Samgraha, Patren Yadi waghaire and Aitihasik Patren have now been brought abreast to the latest research and provide absolutely reliable original sources for the study of Maratha history.

3. Bakhars - The Chitnis Bakhar was written by Malhar Ramrao Chitnis under the orders of Shahu Maharaj. the younger alias Aba Sahib

in 1810 - 1811. The dates of the bakhars are mostly wrong. No reference has been made to the documents which for this work formed the base. Sometimes events are wrongly narrated and names of places and persons are wrongly given. But they provide a connected narrative of most of the important events and cannot, therefore, be completely ignored. The following bakhars have been used:-

(a) Thoreley Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra.

(b) Sambhaji and Rajaram Yanchi Charitren.

(c) Dhakte Ramraja Va Dhakte Shahu Maharaj Yanchi Charitren.

4. Chandrachur Daftar - These are the papers of Chandrachur Daftar Edited by D.V. Apte, and Published by Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona. Very little use of this book has been made in this work.

5. Kaifiyats Yadis etc. - Rao Bahadur Ganesh Chimnaji Vad selected certain records from the Alienation office, Poona, about the families of historical renown in the Deccan. They were later edited by Purshottam Vishram Mawjee and D.B. Parasnis and published by P.V. Mawjee, in 1908. Since these papers did not form part of the original records of the Peshwa's government, they do not possess any independent value but they contain interesting and useful information regarding the historical houses in the Deccan. It has been consulted only on rare occasions.

6. Marathanyanchi Itihasanchi Sadhnen - This is the original material for the History of the Marathas in 22 volumes published by V.K. Rajwade, beginning from 1903. It is a valuable collection of old papers which were lying unnoticed in most unexpected quarters. He was one of the founders of the Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal where most of the originals are stored. The papers published by Rajwade are

of a miscellaneous character in - sanadas, letters, bakhars, state papers, petitions, etc. He has tried to arrange them subjectwise. The chronology is somewhat confused and the dates of many papers are doubtful. In many of the volumes Rajwade has written learned introductions. His volumes provide excellent material for the study of Maratha history from absolutely original sources. In the present work volumes I, II, III, IV, VI, XII, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XX and XXIX have been chiefly used. Volume I contains 304 historic letters dealing with the post-Shahu period from 1750 to 1763 and it has a long and learned introduction. Volumes III, IV, and VI contain miscellaneous correspondence from 1700 to 1761 and yield some valuable information and all the three contain an introduction by the author. Volume VII is chiefly valuable for the papers of the Amatya family of Baroda. Volume VIII concerns with the sources of Maratha history and many dates have been corrected therein.

7. Marathi Rumals - I and II edited by H.K.Bhave. No important information is available from them. A paper in Rumal I discloses that Shahu had a son from his junior wife Sagunabai, who was named Sambhaji and who died three year old.

8. Purandare Daftar - It is a collection of old papers of the Purandare family which was so closely connected with the family of the Peshwas since the days of Balaji Vishwanath. Only its first volume has been used. Some of the papers published in this volume have brought to light facts hitherto unknown. Considerable use has been made of these papers in reconstructing the history of the period from 1750 to 1761. This volume contains 426 documents and has been edited by K.V. Purandare, who has also written a detailed introduction,

and published by Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, 1929.

9. Sanads and Letters - Selected from the government records in the Alienation office, Poona, by Rao Bahadur Ganesh Chimnaji Vad, and edited by Purushottam Vishram Mawjee and D.B.Parasnis and published by P.V.Mawjee. It contains sanads which have been classified under five different heads.

10. Selections from the Peshwa Daftar- Edited by Rao Bahadur G.S. Sardesai and published by the Bombay Government from time to time beginning from 1931, in 49 volumes. It contains contemporary records including despatches, news, letters, private letters and sanads, etc. The original papers were in difficult Modi script, but they are now printed in the Devnagri or Balbodh script with a brief summary in English at the foot of each paper. Obscure points have been elucidated by the editor. Few papers in it throw light on the royal period, the information on the early Peshwa period is meagre. They, however, provide the most authentic contemporary source for the reconstruction of the Maratha history. They are classified subject-wise, but sometimes a very important paper of a subject is to be found in another volume. The dates of some of these papers perhaps require further scrutiny. For this thesis, the following volumes have been chiefly consulted:-

II. The Affairs of Panipat - 1747-1761

V. The Political Affairs of Barbhai. It also deals with the affairs of the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

VI. Ramraja's struggle for Power.

VII. Early Activities of Shahu and Balaji Vishwanath, 1707-1720.

VIII. Shahu in His Private Life.

IX. Bajirao and His Family, 1720-1740.

X. Early strife between Bajirao and Nizam.

XI. Shahu's Relations with Sambhaji of Kolhapur.

XIII. Rajirao's Entry into Malwa and Bundelkhand.

XVII. Shahu and Bajirao - Administrative.

XVIII. Private Life of Shahu and the Peshwa.

XX. The Bhonsles of Nagpur (1717-1774).

XXI. Balajirao Peshwa and the Events in the North- 1741-1761.

XXII. Extracts from the Peshwa's Diaries.

XXIII. Balaji Bajirao - Administrative.

XXV. Balaji Bajirao Peshwa and the Nizam (1740-1761).

XXVI. Tarabai and Sambhaji (1738-1761).

XXVII. Balajirao Peshwa and the Events in the North 1742-1761(Supplementary).

XXVIII. Peshwa Balajirao - Karnatak Affairs (1740-1761).

XXX. Miscellaneous Papers of Shahu and His First two Peshwas (1700-1740).

XXXI. Papers selected from the Jamav Section.

XXXIII. Shahu's campaign against the Sidis of Janjira (Supplementary paper).

XL. Miscellaneous Papers of Peshwa Balajirao.

XLIII. The Social and Religious Matters under the Peshwas (1727-1797).

XLIV. Some Historical Families (Kaifiyats and Geneologies).

XLV. Documents illustrating Maratha Administration.

11. Selection from the Peshwa Daftar- New series I and II-edited by P.M.Joshi and published by Bombay Government, 1957. It is more or less a work supplementary to the former S.P.D. edited by Shri G.S. Sardesai. The letters incorporated in these series are mainly concerned with the Karnatak and Bengal campaigns of Raghuji.

12. Selections from the Satara Rajas and Peshwa's Diaries, vol.I Shahu Chhatrapati. The selections have been prepared by Rao Bahadur Ganesh Chimnaji Vad from the original Marathi records and an English summary is given below each item. It is published by the Deccan Vernacular Translation Society, Poona, in 1907. The selections cover a period of over one hundred years (1708-1816) and furnish most valuable material for reconstructing the history of the Marathas. In them the light has been thrown on the condition of the people; how they lived and thrived, their morals, manners and customs, along with the political events. They tell us how the government machinery functioned, how the revenue was raised, how the forts were guarded and how justice was dispensed. These diaries are, however, not exhaustive. The extracts of diaries given by Rao Bahadur G.S.Sardesai in Peshwa Daftar volume XXII and others usefully supplement the information given in these diaries.

13. Shahuchi Rojnishi - Edited by G. S. Vad and published by the Deccan Vernacular Translation Society, Poona. It is valuable for some of the historical events of the period and appointments of some of the high officers of the state. From his Balaji Bajirao Rojnishi, only volumes II and III have been used.

14. Treaties, Agreements and Sanads - The selection was made by Vad and the papers were edited by Mawjee and Parasnis and published by P.V.Mawjee. It contains almost all important and original sanads. Much use has been made of this selection. This selection contains the agreement between the Peshwa and Tarabai in which the latter openly declared Ram Raja to be an imposter. Since the selection has been made from original papers it has great historical importance.

15. Vaidya Daftar - These are the papers of Vaidya Daftar edited by Shri Shankar Laxman Vaidya of the period from 1645 to 1740 and published by Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona. Balambhat Vaidya and Vishwanath Bhatt Vaidya were the money lenders, from whom Bhonsles used to take money. These papers give useful information about the financial position and administration of Raghuji Bhonsle. Ample use has been made of volumes I to V in this work.

II. Marathi Journals

1. Bharat Warsha and Itihas Samgraha - These two journals devoted exclusively to history were started by Rao Bahadur D.B.Parasnis. The Bharatwarsha enjoyed publication only for two years (1899-1900), but its twenty four numoers contain many original records and learned reconstructions of Maratha history. The Shahu Maharajachi Bakhar published in it is attributed to his Chitnis, Govindrao. It gives important information about the intrigues and the final choice of Ram Raja. The Pant Amatyachi Bakhar, the Pant Pratinidhichi Bakhar, the Pant Pratinidhichi Bakhrivar Tippanen, the Pant Pradhan Yanchi Dusri Shakavali and the articles on the Maratha war of independence after the death of Sambhaji have been fully utilized. Most of the original letters of historic importance given in it have been incorporated in the Aitihasik Patren of Rao Bahadur Sardesai and others. The Itihas Samgraha was still more important. It was started in 1903 and continued for seven years. It contains original material and first hand information. The portion most utilised in the present work is Peshwa Daftarantil Mahiti, Aitihasik Tippanen Vol.I, Prachin Maratha Sardar, Junya Aitihasik Goshti Part II, Aitihasik Sphut Lekh IV and Shiv Charitra Sahitya Vol.III.

2. Bhartiya Itihas Ani Sanskriti Book, April 17, 1968. This Trimasik journal was published by Mumbai Marathi Granth Sangrahalaya-chya Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal. This Trimasik and its annual numbers and proceedings of the Research Conferences have been utilized. In some of them, original letters, sanads etc. of considerable historic importance and also some learned dissertations are to be found.

3. Kavya Itihas Sangraha - It was started by Sane and others in 1878 and it continued for eleven years (upto 1889) and published by Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal, Poona. It published the Chitnis Bakhar in instalments and also some historic letters, and petitions etc. of great value. These letters and petitions etc. have since been incorporated in the two volumes of historical letters edited by Sardesai and others - Aitihasik Patren and Aitihasik Patren Yadi Waghaire. Other important items of this journal are Peshwanchi Bakhar, Peshwanchi Shakawali, Marathi Samrajyachi Chhoti Bakhar.

4. Trimasik - This journal was published by the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, and its annual numbers and proceedings of the Research Conferences have been utilised. In some of them, original letters, sanads, etc. of considerable historic importance and also some learned dissertations are to be found. Mainly the volumes IV, V, VIII, IX, XII, XV, XVI, XXXI, XXX, XXXVIII and annual numbers Varshik Itivarta Shake 1835 and Dwitiya Sammelan Vrata Shake 1835 have been used in this work.

III. Secondary Sources and later works (Marathi):

1. Aitihasik Pharsi Sahitya - by Shri G.H.Khare and published by Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, in 1937. It is an important and recent work on the history of the Marathas. The writer Has brought

into light many important and unpublished Pharsi letters, which throw light upon the Maratha history. These bring out many new facts of those times and help us in making and understanding the events of that period. In this work only volume IV has been consulted.

2. Aitihasik Sankirna Sahitya - Series published by the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, has published historical letters and learned discourse having some bearing on the subject. They are mainly devoted to the history of the later period, but now and then some articles or original papers appeared in them which throw light on events and persons of historic importance. In this work only its vol.IV has been used.

3. Balaji Bajirao Peshwa Yanchi Roznishi - Vol. I- prepared by Rao Bahadur Ganesh Chimnaji Vad and published by the Deccan Vernacular Translation Society, Bombay, 1907. This gives a vivid description of the life and times of Balaji Bajirao Peshwa. The day-to-day events of his time are here described in detail.

4. Bhonslyanchya Bangalyaril Swarya - by V.N. Sahestrabudha and published by Rajwade Sanshodhan Mandal, Dhulekadum, Mobadala, 1944. It is a comprehensive history of the invasions of Bengal by the Bhonsles. In this book some new facts are being given regarding these invasions viz., the writer says that the first invasion took place in the year 1738 and not in 1742 as it is generally known. The causes of invasions and its results are being discussed critically and in detail.

5. Bhonsle Vansha Charitra- edited by S.Gopalan and published by the Mysore Government, 1951. This book mainly deals with the Bhonsle

rulers of Tanjore. Therefore, scanty use of this book is made in this work.

6. British Riyasat - by G.S.Sardesai and published by Ganesh Mahadeo & Co., Bombay, 1923. Like Marathi Riyasat, it is also a reliable general history of the Marathas.

7. Maharashtra Itihas Manjari - edited by D.V.Apte and published by Chitrashala Prakashan, Poona. The book is mainly concerned with the Maratha administration. Its pros and cons are being discussed critically, viz., the Saranjami system and the causes of the rise of the Peshwas and general condition of the Maratha Raj.

8. Maratha and Angrez - by Nar Singh Chintamani Kelkar and published by Itihas Prakashan Sansthan, Allahabad, 1963,I edition. The book deals mainly with the relations of Marathas with the English. The rise of the Maratha power and its conflicts with the English people in their struggle for securing the power in India. Factors which were responsible for the downfall of the Marathas in this struggle of ascendancy are discussed in detail. We get a glimpse of the Maratha history in this book.

9. Marathi Riyasat - by G.S.Sardesai. It is a most comprehensive and reliable general history of the Marathas of the period ranging from 1820 to 1740, and published by Keshav Bhikaji Dhawale of Bombay in 1942. A revised edition of it has come out in handy parts. In it is incorporated the latest research, but its dates have been revised in some cases by the author in his latest work in English - The New History of the Marathas.

10. Nagpurkar Bhonsleyanchi Bakhar - by K.R.Gupte and published by

Madhya Pranta Samshodhan Mandal, Nagpur, II edition, 1936. It is useful for giving a connected account of the Nagpur family. Although it possess no independent value due to its being a later compilation, yet it can be profitably used, supplemented by No.XXII of the Selection from the Peshwa Daftar volumes. A revised edition of this Bakhar has come out.

11. Nagpur Prantacha Itihas - Written and published ~~in 1934~~ by Y.M. Kale in 1934. It is a comprehensive history of the Bhonsles of Nagpur. As a later compilation it possesses no independent value, but it is useful for giving a connected and comprehensive account of the Nagpur family.

12. Nagpurchya Sanskritik Itihas - by D.G. Landge and published by Madhya Pradesh Sanshodhan Mandal, Nagpur, 1954. This book gives a cultural account of the Nagpur city. The buildings and park built by Raghuji I, the main historical buildings of the town and the burning of the city by the English people have been described in detail. A little bit use of this book has also been made in this work.

13. Persian - Jaipur Akhabarat - These are useful for getting information about the Marathas and their relation with the Rajputs for the first half of the 18th century.

14. Vidarbhantil Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha vol.I - edited by Y.K. Deshpande and D.G.Landge and published by Vidarbha Sanshodhan Mandal, Nagpur, 1959, I edition. It is a compilation of letters dealing with the history of then Vidharbha province.. Most of the letters are being concerned with Kanoji Bhonsle. Only a little bit of material dealing with Raghuji Bhonsle I is being found in its volume I. Hence very little use has been made of it.

IV. English - Original Sources:

1. Aliwardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal - by J.N.Sarkar - translated from the Persian text of Karam Ali. This book deals with the affairs of Bengal and the campaigns of the Marathas over Bengal, their causes and effects etc. It gives a different version of the massacre of Bhaskar Ram - the Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha forces. It is published in 'Bengal - Past and Present', vol.67, 1948.

2. Calendar of Madras Despatches - 1744-1755 - edited by H.Dodwell and published by the Madras Government in 1917. The letters incorporated in it are mainly concerned with the southern campaigns of the Marathas and the events dealing with the Nizam, Chanda Saheb, the French, the English and the Marathas. The letters are original, so these provide an authentic picture of the south in those times.

3. Calendar of the Madras Records - 1740-1744 edited by H.Dodwell and published by the Madras Government in 1917. It also deals with the events of the south and the part played by the Marathas in it. We get a vivid description of Raghuji's Karnatak campaigns in these letters.

4. Calendar of Persian Correspondence - These are the original papers of Persian translated into English and published by the Government of India, 1914. These papers give in detail the campaigns of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The papers are the original ones, so these are of great historical value. We get an account of the authentic terms of treaty which took place between Raghuji I and Nawab Aliwardi Khan of Bengal in 1751. Mainly the volumes I, II and III have been consulted.

5. Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories - published by the Central Provinces Government, Nagpur, 1924. It is a compilation of the travelling experiences of the European travellers who from time to time crossed the territories of Nagpur during 18th and 19th centuries. Hence they give us first hand knowledge of the conditions prevailing in the Nagpur territories in those times. Particularly the narration of T. Motte throws valuable light upon the administration of the Marathas in Nagpur territories and its effect upon the inhabitants of those territories. The description is somewhat a biased one.

6. Fort William - India House Correspondence - vol.I - 1748-1756 - by K.K.Datta and published by the Government of India. These papers give us valuable information about the Maratha invasions of Bengal and their effect upon the people and trade etc.

7. History of the Maharattas - by Captain James Grant Duff in 3 volumes and published by the Oxford University in 1921 (Revised edition). It is a pioneer work written in 1826. As the last Resident at the Peshwa's court at Poona, Duff had access to original Marathi documents. He primarily used the papers found with the Chhatrapati at Satara, in the office of the Peshwa at Poona, and made considerable use of Khafi Khan's account. With the progress of research his work has become partly out of date and requires to be re-written. But still it remains a primary source of Maratha history. Only the first and second volumes have been consulted.

8. Private Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai - It is a vast record of matters political, historical, social and personal from 1736 to 1761,

of the south and translated from Tamil, edited by Sir J. Frederick Price and published by the Madras Government in 1904. These records mainly deal with the Karnatak campaigns of the Marathas and the involvement of the French in Indian politics. These day-to-day events have been translated from the original Tamil Diary written by Ranga Pillai. Minute details have been given in his diary. It is a valuable and original source for the history of that period of the south. In this work volumes I to IX have been consulted.

9. Records of Fort St. George - Military Department- Country Correspondence - 1753, 1754 , 1756-published by the Madras Government in 1913. These are the original despatches dealing with the history of the south - Raghuji's campaign of the south, his relationship with the Nizam and French etc. As original sources, these are useful.

10. Selections from the Letters - Despatches and other State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariate - Maratha Series Vol.I- edited by George W. Forrest, and published by the Bombay Government in 1885. We get a vivid description of the Bhonsles of Nagpur. Their rise to power, geneology of the Rajas of Berar etc. based on the original letters and despatches etc. Hence these are of historical value.

V. English - Secondary Sources

1, Administrative System of the Marathas and the Military system of the Marathas - by S. N. Sen, published by respectively the University of Calcutta, 1925 II edition, and Orient Longman Calcutta,1958. Both these books deal with the administrative system of the Marathas

in a comprehensive way. Each and every aspect of the Maratha administration has been taken into account and its merits and demerits have been discussed critically.

2. Aliwardi Khan - The Nawab of Bengal - by K.K.Datta. The life and times of Aliwardi Khan have been discussed in detail, which are based on original sources.

3. Bhonsles of Nagpur - The Last Phase - by Dr. R.M.Sinha, published by S.Chand & Co.Nagpur, 1967. It deals with the later Bhonsle rulers. It gives in detail the administrative aspect of the Bhonsle rule instead of its political history. The chief characteristics of Bhonsle administration are given in minutest detail based upon the original and secondary sources.

4. British Relations with the Nagpur State in the 18th century by C.U.Wills and published by the Government of Central Provinces, Nagpur. This is a history of the Bhonsles of Nagpur from the beginning to the end. This book is mainly based upon the English sources, viz., Duff, Jenkins Report, and Forrester's Despatches. Hence there is nothing new in this work. It, however, gives in detail the territorial conquest of the Bhonsles of Nagpur during the time of Raghuji I and its administrative set up. The prosperity of this region was brought about by the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

5. Dupleix and Clive - by Henry Dodwell and published by the Gorakhpur University, in 1962. This book contains in detail the conflicts and clashes between the French and the English for the supremacy of power in India. In this effort they came in conflict and contact with the Indian powers, such as the Marathas and the Nizam.

In this we get plenty of material about the relationship of Raghuji I and the French.

6. Dupleix Pondicherry - by Dubrenil Jorvean - This book deals with the doings and works of Dupleix in India. It gives valuable information about the French establishments in India and their relations with the Marathas. It is based upon original sources.

7. Eighteenth Century Deccan - by Pagdi Setu Madhavrao and published by the Popular Prakashan, Bombay. It is a valuable book as far as its contents are concerned. Chapter three contains the hitherto unpublished biography of Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Masire Nizami of Lala Mansaram, and the letters of Nizam-ul-Mulk - which throw light upon the Maratha-Nizam relations. It is quite a handy book for this work.

8. Fall of the Mughal Empire - by J.N.Sarkar and published by M.C.Sarkar and Sons, Calcutta, 1749. It is a masterly work, which is based on original Persian and Maratha sources, therefore, it is of immense value. The author has described in minute detail the Maratha invasion of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. As far as possible all sources have been tapped in writing. This phase of Mughal history, leaves for others little to write on this subject - matter. Only volume I has been used.

9. The French in India - by S.P.Sen and published by K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta. It is a book about the French in India - their establishments and struggle, the rise of the Marathas and the expansion of the English power. It gives in detail the importance of the part played by the French in giving a new turn to India's political destiny in the 18th century.

10. History of the Military Transaction of the British Nation in Indostan - written and published by Robert Orme is valuable. Volumes I and III have been consulted: Volume III is important in as much as it contains maps and plans to accompany his History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Hindustan. It gives valuable information about the Military administration of the Marathas and here and there of the Bhonsles of Nagpur. His other book, 'Historical Fragments of the Mughal Empire- war in Indostan' - 2 volumes - is not of much value to the subject.

11. History of the Maratha people - by C.A.Kincaid and D.B. Parasnis and published by Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, India, 1931. It is a general history of the Marathas like that of Grant Duff. Both Marathi and Persian sources have been made use of in the compilation of this work, but on account of the progress of research many facts have come to light which are not to be found in these volumes. Mainly the chapters XXXIV, XXXVI, ~~XXXIX~~, XXXVII, and XLI XXXIX have been consulted. The wine episode has been given in detail, in this book.

12. History of Orissa - by H.K.Mehtab and published by the Lucknow University in 1947. In this book an effort has been made to write a History of Orissa in a meagre way.

13. History of Orissa, vol.II - by W.W.Hunter, A.Stirling, J. Beams and N.K.Sahu, published by the Nabajiban Press, Calcutta. Nothing new has been added in this book, to what has already been written on this topic.

14. History of the French in India - by G.B.Malleson and published

by Longman's Green and Co. London, in 1868. It is a history of the French rule in India and their struggle with the Indian powers for establishing their supremacy in the Deccan. It is based upon secondary sources.

15. Historical Sketches of the South India.- by Mark Wilks and published by the Mysore Government in 1930. It deals with the historical facts of the Southern India, involving Nizam, Maratha, French and English etc. It is a comprehensive history of the south and is based upon original and secondary sources.

16. Later Mughals - 2 volumes - by William Irvine and edited by Sir Jadunath Sarkar and published by Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1971. It is exclusively based on Persian authorities and is indispensable for Mughal affairs after the death of Aurangzeb. For his information about the Maratha affairs, Irvine mostly relied on Grant Duff and he had written only that much what was not known about the Marathas. Sarkar has utilised Marathi sources in his notes so far as they were available to him in 1920.

17. Maharashtra Puran - by poet Gangaram. It begins with the question of realising the chauth from Bengal and ends with the treacherous murder of Bhaskar Pandit. It is of great historical value. Only first canto is available. It tallies with Sair and Niyaz. It is an important contemporary record. Its translation in English by Tamarash Chandra has been used in this work which is published by the University of Calcutta, in 1930.

18. Main currents of Maratha History - by G.S.Sardesai, and published by M.C.Sarkar and Sons, Calcutta, 1926. It is a collec-

tion of Patna University Readership Lectures in 1926, which were enlarged, rewritten and published by him in 1933 in the form of a small book. As its title shows, it touches only the main features of Maratha History. Much new material has come to light since its publication.

19. Malwa in Transition or A Century of Anarchy - The first phase (1698-1765) by Dr. Raghubir Sinh and published by D.B.Taraporewale, Bombay, 1936. It is a good history of Malwa based on original Persian and Marathi sources. The early Maratha raids in Malwa are given in considerable detail.

20. Maratha Rule in the Carnatic -by C.K.Srinivasan and published by the Annamalai University in 1944. It gives useful information about the Maratha invasions upon Carnatic and its outcome.

21. Maratha Supremacy - by R.C.Majumdar. This is the VIII and the last volume of the series, "The History and Culture of the Indian People", published by Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay in 1977. This volume deals with the history of India from the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 to the Maratha war of 1818. It was an eventful period that witnessed the end of Muslim rule, the rise and fall of the Maratha power and the foundation of the British empire in India. It is based on original sources, hence a considerable use of this book has been made in this work.

22. Nagpur Affairs - Vol.I - by T.S.Shejwalker and published by Deccan Society, Poona, 1954. It mainly deals with the later Bhonsles of Nagpur, therefore, scanty use has been made of this book in this work.

23. New History of the Marathas - in 3 volumes by G.S.Sardesai and published by Phoenix Publications, Bombay, 1946,I edition. It incorporates in it the latest research. Enough use has been made of the first two volumes. It does not contain as many details as his Marathi Riyasat, but it shall remain the last word on Maratha history for many years to come.

24. Orissa under Marathas - by B.C.Ray and published by Kitab Mahal,Calcutta, 1960. It is a comprehensive and reliable history of Orissa based on original sources. The author has dealt in detail the factors leading to the conquest of Orissa by the Marathas in the time of Raghuji Bhonsle. This work is based on Seir Mutaqherin by Golam Hussain. Ample use has been made of this book in this work.

25. Peshwa Baji Rao I and Maratha Expansion - by V.G.Dighe and published by Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay, 1944. It mainly deals with the life and times of Baji Rao I, but here and there some light has been thrown upon the relation of Baji Rao with that of Raghuji Bhonsle of Nagpur, particularly their rivalry and clash with regard to the invasion of Bhopal in 1738.

26. Raj - Gond Maharajas of the Satpura Hills - by C.U.Wills and published by the Central Provinces Government, Nagpur, 1923. It is a good and valuable book about the conquests of Raj Gond kingdoms by Raghuji. Hitherto this aspect of Raghuji's conquests of this region has not been brought out vividly and in detail. The author has tried to focus our attention on this aspect of history and some new facts have come to light, which give valuable information about Raghuji's reign. It is an account of local history based on Mohammedan authorities.

27. Relations between the French and the Marathas -1668 to 1812 by V.G.Hatalkar and published by the University of Bombay, 1958. It is a comprehensive and reliable history about the relations between the French and the Marathas based on original sources. Some new factors have come to light about their relationship, particularly of Raghuji with that of Dumas and Dupleix and the factors leading to the compromise between the two.

28. Report on the Territories of the Raja of Nagpur- 1826&1827 and its supplement - by Sir Richard Jenkins and published by Central Provinces Government, Nagpur, 1901. It gives the history of the Bhonsles of Nagpur in a nutshell. The administrative aspect of their rule has been described in detail. Nothing new has been found in his report.

29. Rise of the Peshwas - by Dr. H.N.Sinha - It was the first attempt to use original Marathi sources in a modern English work on Maratha history.

30. Rise of the Maratha Power - by M.G.Ranade and published by Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal, Maharashtra Rajya, Poona. It is an old book which deals with the analysis of the general features of Maratha history in a good way, although some of its facts have become doubtful due to modern research in this field. Mainly the chapter on Tanjore has been consulted.

31. Shivajee and His Times- by J.N.Sarkar, IV, edition, 1948, published by S.C.Sarkar, Calcutta. This is a valuable book to know about Shivajee and his times. Therefore, scanty use has been made of this book in this work.

32. History of Bengal - by Stewart Charles and published by Oriental Publishers, Delhi. In this book the history of Bengal has been given in detail. Scanty use of this book has been made in this work.

33. Tarabai and Her Times- by Dr. Brij Kishore and published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963. It is a learned and authoritative work on Tarabai, based on Persian, French, Marathi and English sources, therefore, it is valuable in knowing the history of that time. Some new facts have also been brought to light. Intrigues of Tarabai, her relationship with Maratha Sardars (particularly Raghuji Bhonsle) and Peshwa and her efforts to enthrone Ram Raja on the Satara Gaddi, have been brought vividly into the picture. It is a critical and reliable history of Tarabai.

34. Following Gazetteers have been consulted in connection with this research work:-

1. Amraoti District Gazetteer.
2. Berar Gazetteer.
3. Central Provinces Gazetteer- edited in 1870 by Charles Grant.
4. Gazetteer of India- Maharashtra State Gazetteer- Nagpur edition.
5. Imperial Gazetteer of India- Provincial series- Central Provinces - by H.V.Russell.
6. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Volumes XVIII and XX.
7. Nagpur District Gazetteer -Central Provinces District Gazetteers - edited by R.V.Russell.

These Gazetteers are rich in topographical detail, but their facts are no authentic history after all.

VI. Journals - English

1. Bengal - Past and Present - Mainly the volumes XXV, XXVII, XXXVIII and XLVI have been consulted. Volumes XXVII contains the translation of Maharashtra Puran by J.N.Samaddar, under the article, "The Marathas Invasion of Bengal in 1743."

2. Journals of Indian History, volumes XXXVIII, part II, 1961 and XXXIX , 1961, have been consulted. Journal of Indian History 1925 contains an article 'The Mahratta Invasion of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa' by J.N.Sammaddar.

3. Proceedings of the Meetings of the Indian Historical Records Commission published by the Government of India, have brought to light many new facts. A detailed account of the Bargi invasion of Bengal based on original sources has been given by Professor J.N. Samaddar in the proceedings of the year 1924, volume VI. Some new facts in the Maratha-Jaipur Relations have been given by G.H.Khare in the proceedings of the year 1948, volume XXIV. There is an Oriya letter from the Madalapaji relating to Raghuji's march to Orissa and Bengal in 1743, by P. Acharya, in volume XXIV. It gives the route through which Marathas of Nagpur entered Orissa and Bengal. Many of its volumes, viz. VI, XIII, XVII, XIX , XXI , XXIV, XXVII and XXXV have been consulted for this research work.

Matter from the following books in English have also been taken:-

1. Ancient History of Garha - Mandala - by Ganesh Datta Pathak.
2. Bombay Secretariate - The Secret and Political Department Diary - Volume, 18 A (1777 dup.); 19 (1778 dup); 19A(1778 dup);

19B(1778 dup); 20 (1779).

3. Early History of India - V.A.Smith (1908).

4. Geonolies of the Marathas - 2 volumes - compiled by G.S.Sardesai.

5. Highlands of Central India by J. Forsyth.

6. History of the Central Provinces and Berar - J.N.Sil (1917).

7. History of the Garha - Mandola Rajas - by Captain W.H.Sleeman, published in Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal for 1837, vol. VI. Part II, pp.621-648.

8. History of India - by Elphinstone- 9th edition, 1905.

9. History of India - by H.M.Elliot and J. Dowson.

10. India Office Records - The French in India, Volume II (Extracts of letters from the President and Council at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras to the Court of Directors, (1749-1759).

Volume IV - extracts of letters from the President and Council at Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras to the Court of Directors, (1752-1779).

11. Introduction to Peshwa Diaries - a paper read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society 1900- by Ranade.

12. Judicial system of Marathas by V.T.Gune.

13. Life of H.T.Colebrooks - by his son Sir T.E.Colebrooks, published in 1873.

14. Memoir of Central India - by Sir J.Malcolm (2nd edition of 1827).

15. Oxford History of India - by V.A.Smith (1920).

16. Ramsay's Report on the Nagpur Kingdom, 1845.

17. Satara Papers - 2 volumes - Published by Satara Historical Society.

18. Sketch of the History of the Bhonsle Family- Nagpur Secretariate- 1811.

VII. French - (Published)

1. Catalogue des Mss. des Anciennes Archiyes de l Inde Francaise Tomes I (1922) II 1927, edited by E. Gaudart.

2. Correspondence du conseil superieur de Pondicherry et de La Campquie, edited by A. Martineau, Times III, IV (2nd edition) V.

3. La Jurnal de Bussy - edited by A. Martineau, Paris 1932.

4. Letters et conventions des Gonverneurs de Pondicherry area differents Princes Hinduis (1666 - 1793), edited by A.Martineau, Pondicherry, 1911-14.

5. Memoires de Francois Martin, edited by A. Martineau, Volumes I, II, III, Paris 1931.

VII. Persian - (Published)

1. Ahwal-i-Mahabat Jung - by Yusuf Ali.

2. Ahwal-i-Ali - wirdi-Khan or Tarikhi Mahabat Jung -published by A.S.B.Bibliotheca India work No.248- This work gives a very valuable and detailed description about the history of the Bengal Subah during the mid 18th century, especially about the administration of Aliwardi Khan. It lacks the first or the last few pages. The name of the author has not been disclosed. The author gives us many new facts and dates well which are not mentioned by any other contemporary writer.

3. Khazana-i-Amira - of Gulam Ali Azad Bilgrami- translated by P. Setu Madhav Rao Pagdi - The book deals with Maratha-Nizam Relations. He gave a review of Maratha activities in the Deccan and Northern India, from the beginning upto the year 1763.

4. Masir-ul-Umara - by Gulam Ali Azad Bilgrami. All biographies of the Nizams were incorporated by Bilgrami in this book. The Bhopal campaign of Bajirao has been described in detail.

5. Muzaffar Nawab - by Karam Ali.

6. Riyaz-us-Salatin - by Ghulam Hussain Salim, and translated into English by Abdus Salam and published by the Asiatic Society, Calcutta in 1902. It gives a vivid and reliable history of Bengal of 18th Century. It is an important contemporary record. Hence a good use of this book has been made in this work.

7. Siyar-ul-Mutaqherin, vols. I & II.- ~~Seir Mutaqherin~~-by Seid Ghulam Hussain Khan, an Indian nobleman of high rank, who wrote both as an actor and spectator, Calcutta. It is an eye witnessed account of the events of historical importance, which took place in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa during the eighteenth century. The author gives a vivid, authentic and valuable information about the history of these three provinces. The description is not a biased one, therefore it is genuine and comprehensive. The acquisition of Orissa by the Marathas and the Afghan insurrection against the Nawab of Bengal, Aliwardi Khan, have been dealt with in detail. It throws full light on Aliwardi's career before he seized the throne of Bengal in April 1740. Therefore, comprehensive use of its translation in English by Nota Manus II, edition 1801, published by R. Cambray and Co. Calcutta, has been made in the present work.

8. Tarikh-i-Banglah- by Salimullah.

9. Tazkira- by Anand Ram Mukhbis - its translation has been published in Volume VIII of the book 'History of India' by Elliot and Dowson.

10. Waqai-i-Fath Bangala or Waqai-i-Mahabar Jung by Muhammad Wafa, Mss No.1776 in the Oriental Public Library, Patna. This Mss. covers 90 folios, but from folio 63 we get a collection of letters, which are not very useful for historical purposes, written by the author to his superior and friends. In the first 63 folios we get a detailed account of the events which took place immediately before and after the occasion of Aliwardi to the masnad of Bengal brought down to 1748 A.D. He being a contemporary observer, gives us many valuable details about the regime of Aliwardi, especially about the Maratha invasions and the Afghan rebellions, which profoundly influenced the condition of the Bengal Subah.

Life and Times of Raghuji Bhonsle I of Nagpur

THESIS SUBMITTED
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CHAPTER - VIII

CONCLUSION - RAGHUJI BHONSLE - AN ESTIMATE

A large number of capable leaders whether acting with or against Baji Rao constituted in no small measure to the history of the period, and they deserve some notice. One of them was Raghuji Bhonsle, the founder of the principality of Nagpur. The Bhonsles, like the Dabhades and the Angrias, began to resent the controlling authority exercised on them by the Peshwa as they were all direct creations of the Chhatrapati, and in no way indebted to the Peshwa for their position. To compare Raghuji with other Maratha Sardars like Shinde, Holkar, and others, would be to do an injustice to him, as they all were the creation of the Peshwa, and had the support of the Peshwa. But as Raghuji was different, he should be given an honourable place among these Maratha Sardars.(1)

Like Debhade, Gaikwad, and Angrey and others, Raghuji also opposed the Peshwa, but for a short while only, as he felt that it would be of no use for himself or for the Maratha Kingdom to oppose the Peshwa. The rivalry between the two could harm the state. Raghuji, however, knew his limitations and managed to restrain his jealousy not allowing it to provoke a rupture with Baji Rao. The

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1. Purandare Daftar- Vol. I, p.153.

two kept up an attitude of mutual respect and dignity, and often also cooperated in their undertakings. The long-standing rivalry between Raghuji and the Peshwa was abandoned for sometime by the efforts of Shahu in the year 1743 A.D. Although Babuji Naik, Tarabai, Dabhade, Damaji Gaikwad, and the Nizam all tried their best to provoke Raghuji against the Peshwa, yet he did not pay any heed to their pleas, and remained true to his own principle. He always kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds, and never turned a traitor to his mother country. It must be said to the credit of both that their relations never came to be appreciably strained during their life time.

In his effort at unifying the Maratha State, however, the Peshwa, with all his patience and diplomacy, found it hard to reduce to obedience the two incorrigible chiefs— the Bhonsles of Nagpur, and the Angrias of Colaba.

The part played by the Bhonsles of Nagpur was so conspicuous in Maratha history that they came in for a large share in the total Maratha conquests over a period of more than fifty years and this naturally accounts for the magnitude of their records. Raghuji was the first and the most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur, and from him was descended the race of the Rajas of Nagpur. From the period alluded to, they had usually acted as a branch of the Maratha confederacy, but had invariably maintained their independence, forming treaties, remaining neutral, or acting either with or against the Peshwa, as it suited their interest or their policy.

The members of the Bhonsle family of Nagpur were military

leaders, with the habits generated by that profession. They had never left the plain manners of their nation; they were connected by the ties of blood, and by constant familiar intercourse, with everyone of their principal officers. Being born in the class of cultivators, they had a hereditary respect for that order, though not restrained by it from every degree of cupidity and plunder, yet they were seldom cruel to lower classes and almost always paid attention to established power and institutions, with the restraints arising from such considerations, the Rajas of Nagpur were, in theory, as absolute as the Maratha Chiefs of Malwa in the internal government of their dominions.(2)

Raghuji started his career in 1728, and by sheer dint of personal valour, combined with extreme circumspection, he rose to a position of eminence from the humble position of a mere soldier and succeeded in carving out for himself an independent field for action in what is now known as Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. He was a self-made man. He had risen to the status of a first rate nobleman at the court of Shahu by the dint of his merit. He, therefore, believed that his status was on a par with that of the Peshwa for all practical purposes. He resented the Peshwa's interference in his sphere of influence. It may be observed that for this mutual jealousy neither the Peshwa nor Raghuji was so much at fault. The defect lay in the weaknesses of the central authority. In the absence of a strong centre, the Marathas were not able to create an effective confederacy which could enforce its authority over all.

Shahu undertook costly distant expeditions in the north, as

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2. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.64.

the south was closed to him. He engaged in his service such active and vigorous men as Peshwa BajiRao, Senapati Dabhade, Sindhia. Udaji Pawar, Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, Malharrao Holkar and many others, and gave free scope to their valour and statesmanship.

Raghuji had either to remain quiet without hope of ever extending his dominion, or forcibly to create a new kingdom in the north. Due to his keen observation, Raghuji found plenty of fighting material scattered all over the country. Several leaders of Maratha bands had made incursions into the distant parts of Malwa, Gujarat and Berar. They had ambition and capacity, and only needed a field for their activities. To check their ambitious spirit was out of question. The central authority wielded by Shahu was itself weaker than that of any of these Maratha leaders- as for instance Kanhoji Angria of Colaba, Kanhoji Bhonsle, Khanderao Dabhade or Chandra Sen Jadav, were each singly more than a match for the weak Shahu. The only remedy was to utilise them for a common purpose and give them a coherent shape, i.e. to create a field in which all could work out their own destiny, in extending Maratha power and influence according to the means and capacity which each possessed.

Shahu gave a free hand, an ample field for action to any and every person who approached him for patronage. Most of the historical families which figure so largely in Maratha history rose to prominence under the direct encouragement of Shahu. Under the Saranjami system of the succeeding period, there was plenty of scope for lucrative military service all over the country. The exaction of Chauth supplied the plausible excuse for Maratha bands to under-

take distant expeditions.(3)

The founders of the Houses of Nagpur, Akalkot, Dhar, Indore, Ujjain, Baroda and other places, were all young boys whose capacity and valour were first recognised and rewarded by Shahu. The Bhonsles of Nagpur, the Bhonsles of Akalkot, Gaikwad, Angrey, and the Sawant of Sawant-wadi, they all used to give Khandani to the central power and provided their army to the central power for help. Raghuji's position was recognised by this central power.

When BajiRao the first Peshwa usurped the supreme authority, Raghuji who was Commander-in-Chief of the forces, and who held the province of Berar in Jagir, proceeded to turn it into an independent government. As the Mohammedan historian informs us, "this man was the first who assumed independence from being a tax-gatherer."(4) It appears, however, that he continued to acknowledge the supremacy of the Raja of Satara and the authority of the office of the Peshwa as the civil executive authority of the state. Although he set up an independent kingdom but maintained close cooperation with King Shahu and the Peshwa.

Raghuji was independent by nature. He did not care either for the King Shahu or the Peshwa. He did what he liked. That is why he abstained from interfering in the affairs of the

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3. Maharashtra Itihas Manjari-edited by Dattaraya Vishnu Apte, pp.226-229.

4. Selections from the letters- Despatches and other state papers-preserved in the Bombay Secretariate-Maratha series-Vol.I,p.12, Edited by George W. Forrest.

Central Government. Although he had a great respect for King Shahu, and he never openly disobeyed him, he sometimes defied his authority. In the same way he kept his jealousy for the Peshwa within bounds. He did not want to work under somebody else. For instance, Shahu had sent him along with Fateh Singh Bhonsle in the Karnatak expedition, but there he took all the powers in his own hands, disregarded Fateh Singh Bhonsle, and made attacks according to his own wishes. Shahu had ordered him to go to Bhopal with his troops for the help of the Peshwa against the Nizam, but he did not obey him, and began to attack the northern regions of India. His invasions of Bengal and Orissa are a proof of his independent nature. He carved out an independent field of action for himself. Later on his example was followed by other Sardars, such as Multanji Holkar, Ranoji Sindhia and Pilaji Gaikwad who became founders of Regal dynasties. All these began to make war and peace without his knowledge and approbation, and to use the troops not for the advantage of the empire, but for their own aggrandisement. In course of time each assumed independent authority, and, while they professed nominal obedience to the Peshwa, they stood in the same relation to him as the Peshwa stood in respect to the Raja of Satara. Raghuji made treaty with the Nizam, without the knowledge or permission of King Shahu or the Peshwa. Terms of negotiations were settled between Safdar Ali Khan and Raghuji without the knowledge of Fateh Singh. Even Ramaji Pant joined hands with Raghuji in this affair. So the Peshwa was asked to chastise Raghuji, and thus to teach him a good lesson for his independent conduct."(5).

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5. S.P.D., XX, 21.

Raghuji was an opportunist. Bold and decisive in action, he was the type of a Maratha leader who saw in the troubles of other states an opening for the fulfilment of his own ambition, and did not even require a pretext for plunder and invasion. Thrice his armies invaded Bengal. He obtained the cession of Cuttack; Chanda, Chhatisgarh and Sambalpur were added to his dominion between 1745 and 1755, the year of his death.

The end of Kanhoji Bhonsle's political career in about 1730 A.D. opened up for Raghuji new opportunities in Berar, Nagpur and the region beyond to the east. Raghuji was not the man to lose such opportunities. He took full advantage of expanding his own independent kingdom. Raghuji distinguished himself as a capable soldier in Karnatak. His leadership and tact in the Karnatak campaign enhanced his prestige at the court of Shahu. The Marathas got a strong foot hold in Karnatak due to him. Pleased with his exploits Shahu conferred upon him, the Mokasa of Berar and Gondwana upto the frontiers of Katak, and appointed him Sena Sahib Subah in place of his uncle, the disobedient Kanhoji Bhonsle. The Karnatak campaign gave Raghuji eminence at the court of Satara, and eventually in the Maratha confederacy. It helped him in giving a status on par with the Peshwa. In fact his Karnatak success was very brilliant.

In Shahu's time there was a basic conflict about the expansion of Maratha Empire- whether to expand it in north or in south. As the south was closed for Shahu, the Peshwa was in the favour of expansion in the north. That is why the Peshwa had left the campaign of the south incomplete, and the Nizam took advantage of that situation. Now the task of finishing this unfinished work came

upon the shoulders of Raghuji. He took up the challenge and showed his military genius in his Karnatak campaign. He was wholly successful in his invasions of Karnatak. By a single stroke he defeated Chanda Saheb and Safdar Ali. This was his masterly expedition in southern most of India, where he hoisted the flag of Maratha kingdom, expanded its limits, and established the authority of the Marathas in India as the supreme power.(6) This proves his military genius. As the Peshwa had been successful in the north by defeating the Mughal Emperor and the Nizam at Bhopal, and in taking them into his own field, Raghuji was successful in the south by defeating the Nawabs of Arcot and Trichinopoly. But the expeditions towards south were more powerful, accurate, and full of war tactics. They were far superior and they established the authority and power of Raghuji in the Maratha Kingdom. He never lost ground there and thus he became an object of jealousy for the Peshwa. Trichinopoly was lost due to Babuji Naik and the jealousy of the Peshwa towards Raghuji and not due to his follies.

In the 18th century the Maratha power extended right upto the southern most part of the peninsula. The Maratha Governors actually held their sway over Trichinopoly and Madura. In 1741, Murar Rao Ghorpade was the governor of Trichinopoly and Appaji Rao held the governorship of Madura. This shows that the Maratha power, though centred at Poona, had its branches reaching far and wide. This was all due to Raghuji, whose main ambition appears to have

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6. S.P.D.XX, 21 and 22; Rajwade, op.cit., Vol.VI, 149; Aitihasik Patravayarahar, No.26.

been to thwart the Peshwa.

The only effective opposition to the establishment of his power came from the direction of Chanda Saheb, and to check his power and keep it in effective bounds became the watch word of his policy. He directed his energy towards preventing his expansionist activities by repudiating his claims to the revenue of the province under his command. He understodd too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long, protracted struggle with him. In spite of being separated from the heart of the Empire by a long distance, Karnatak province offered great possibilities to an ambitious man like Raghuji, and he was not slow to perceive them. His greatest act of bravery was the conquest of Trichinopoly and making Chanda Saheb a prisoner. Raghuji pursued the policy of southward drive so vigorously that it soon brought the Marathas to the gates of Pondicherry and for sometime made them the ruler of the Deccan. He had established beyond challenge the Maratha supremacy in the Deccan. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, Chanda Saheb, and Safdar Ali, who had attempted to follow a strong policy, failed miserably, and Chanda Saheb found himself in captivity of Raghuji, and he came to an understanding with his erstwhile enemy, by not only surrendering the whole of the territory belonging to him, but also by granting Raghuji's claim to Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the revenues of his province. His Karnatak raids were daring in conception and brilliant in execution. This was the greatest success the Maratha arms had ever achieved since the beginning of the Karnatak campaigns in 1725. According to Sardesai, "In the Treaty of Sangola, 1752, the role of Raghuji was very constructive."(7)

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7. Sardesai,G.S. op.cit., Vol.II, p.290.

It was due to his successes in the south that Mir Habib, the Dewan of Murshid Quli Khan, invited the Dewan of Raghuji, Bhaskar Pant, to attack the Katak province, an invitation which he accepted . Thus Raghuji got another opportunity for ipterfering in the matters of Orissa and Bengal also.

Raghuji was not slow to understand the power of the French. Weighing things in his mind, Raghuji might have preferred an honourable retreat to a futile attack. It is not proper to say that he retreated from Pondicherry on account of the French wine. This shows his wisdom and foresightedness. In spite of his promises to the French, Raghuji did not turn a traitor. As none of the Maratha chiefs helped the French in fighting an outside enemy, Raghuji offered his apology to Bussy in these words- "I can give you several reasons to support my conduct, but I shall content myself with giving you only one, viz. that I am a servant of the house of Shahu Raja for three generations, I could not help obeying the orders of Tarabai, who asked me to support Balajirao."(8) Mainly due to the attitude and policy adopted by Raghuji towards the French, the relations between the two remained amicable to the end. The French did not derive any benefit from the Franco-Maratha friendship. Pondicherry was restored to the French in 1697 by the Treaty of Ryswick in Europe. But although the French recovered Pondicherry, the Karnatak had changed hands. With the fall of Jinji, the whole province came under the Mughal domination. The contact with the Marathas, which was lost for a period of 47 years, was resumed in the year 1740, and the Marathas were once more destined to

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8. Hatalkar, V.G.; Relations between the French and the Marathas, p.95.

play an important part in routing out the French from India. This is all due to Raghuji who wanted to expand the Maratha kingdom in the east and the south of India.

The French also did not dare to interfere in the affairs of Raghuji, keeping in view the situation prevailing there at that time. Raghuji also laid down a compromising policy with the French Governor Dumas at Pondicherry. The charge levied by Shahu against Raghuji, that he lost the Maratha Kingdom because of the French wine, was baseless. The Maratha kingdom was not lost due to it. By his policy he kept the French power away from interfering in the Deccan politics. Chanda Saheb did not get the help of the French during the Maratha invasion, as it had been agreed upon, and thus he was defeated. It was Raghuji's foresightedness that he kept a compromising attitude with the French, as they might not give help to his enemies in the south.

After the raids of the Karnatak, Raghuji commenced a series of expeditions to Bengal, which terminated after a contest of ten years in the acquisition by the Marathas of Cuttack, and the promise of twelve lakh of rupees from the Nawab Aliwardi Khan as the Chauth of Bengal and Bihar. His greatest achievement was the establishment of authority over Bengal and Bihar. ~~His greatest achievement was the conquest of Bengal and Orissa.~~ When Shahu allowed Raghuji to extend his sway as far as Bengal, and collect Chauthai, he had not actually obtained a royal farman from Delhi to that effect. This shows his practical attitude in achieving his aims.

From the year 1750 A.D., the English and the French began

to take an active part in the Indian politics. But none of the Indian powers dared to oppose them openly. Even the Peshwa also did not involve himself in the struggle for ascendancy between the French and the English in India. But Raghuji, experiencing many difficulties, conquered the province of Orissa, and imposed Chauthai upon Bengal and Bihar, and this was not an insignificant or an ordinary job. As Peshwa, Shinde and Holkar had established their rule over Malwa and Delhi, so Raghuji had established his rule over these provinces, and, by his valour, he finished up the authority of the Mughals in these provinces at least for ten years. He gave employment to thousands of people there. All this shows his ability and capacity to work. But due to the weakness of his sons, the English took advantage and they took the Diwani of Bengal into their own hands, and finished the claims of Chauthai of the Bhonsles.

The Treaty with the Nawab of Bengal was a complete triumph for Maratha diplomacy. The 18th Century witnessed a change of the first magnitude in the political aspect of India, the transfer of Supreme authority from the Mughal rulers to the Marathas. This payment of Chauth was an acknowledgement by the Nawab of his defeat, of his inability to hold his own against the Marathas.

The Marathas entered the northern provinces of the empire in the first half of the 18th century. In Raghuji the policy of north-eastward expansion found its most fearless champion. He realised full well the weakness of the empire, the levity of its rulers, the incompetence and corruption of its officers; and made a bid for the conquest of this region and for imposing the Chauthai.

His Bengal campaigns were, however, not so brilliant and precise as that of the Karnatak..

Due to the rise of the English power in Bengal, the aim of Raghuji was not the territorial conquest of Bengal, but only to impose Chauthai there. That is why the English began to take interest in the affairs of the Bhonsles of Nagpur and ultimately in 1803, the Bhonsles were subdued by the English. On the other hand the English could not consolidate their power in Orissa, when it was under the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

As an opportunist in Bengal also, he sought the cooperation of the rebellious Afghans against the Nawab of Bengal. "When the mutinous Afghans sought the help of Raghuji against the Nawab of Bengal-Aliwardi Khan, Raghuji finding his advantage in attaching to his person and cause some thousand Afghans, all old soldiers, equipped at all points, set out for Birbhum.(9)

The campaigns of Bengal, though they had been concluded to the advantage of the Marathas, were financially not a success. They had added to the huge debt Raghuji had already contracted and he had to find new fields for conquests liquidating his debts. His Bengal atrocities are being exaggerated. The relations between Bengal and the Marathas were old. The misfortune of the nation was that the Peshwa and Raghuji were at cross purposes with each other at Bengal. The Peshwa should also be blamed for Bengal invasions and its failure.

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9. Siyar, op.cit., Vol.II, p.7.

Raghuji not only made his name in the conquest of Bengal, but he also exhibited great heroism in bringing uncivilised Gond kingdoms of the erstwhile Central Province under Maratha subjugation, consolidating them, and creating a Nagpur State as a distinct entity in which he stands quite on par with Malharrao Holkar, and any of the Sindhias. He colonized Nagpur and other cities with Maharashtra elements and made his state a strong and wealthy base by training a large band of devoted co-workers in war and diplomacy. He established himself in Nagpur, where he reigned nominally as the representative of the Gond prince from 1743 to 1755. By 1751, he had effected the conquest of the Devgarh territories, Chhatisgarh, Ratanpur, the capital of Haihaivanshi kingdom, capitulated without a blow in 1741 on the advance of Maratha General, Bhaskar Pant, four years afterwards, with the deposition of the last Raja, a Rajput dynasty ended. The fort of Chanda was delivered to Raghuji by the treachery of a Dewan in 1749 and two years later it was finally ceded to him. He quietly extended the conquest which had been made by his cousin and subdued several of the princes whose territories bordered on his government, but it was because of the disunion which occurred in the Devgarh Raja's family that he was enable to lay the foundation of a principality for himself, which gradually increased until it included within its limits the greater part of Berar. A considerable part of the Nagpur territory is supposed to have once belonged to the Gond Chiefs. Devgarh and Chanda formed the nucleus, as it were, of the Bhonsle dominion. The rights originally exercised by the Marathas in those provinces were acquired by treaty; and though the Chief of Chanda was soon reduced to the situation of

a mere prisoner, both in name and reality, the Devgarh prince preserved his nominal superiority over the Maratha masters of his country, and his officers were associated in most of the acts of governments relating to the revenue. Burhanshah, the Gond Raja, though allowed to retain the outward insignia of royalty, became practically a state prisoner, and all real power passed to the Marathas, as in the case of disputes in the Gond Kingdom. Raghuji took complete advantage of the dissensions when they occurred between the brothers.

Raghuji's territory included the area from Berar to Cuttack. The Gond Kingdoms of Garha-Mandala, Chanda or Chandrapur and Devgarh were in his possession. Berar proper was under the dual authority of the Bhonsles and the Nizam. The strategic forts of Gawilgarh and Narnala with the territory attached to them were actually exclusively under Raghuji's possession. The fort of Manikdurg in the Mahur area belonged to him. The states of Chhatisgarh were also under his sway as important outposts between Nagpur and the province of Cuttack. He was the real founder of the Nagpur state. He established the kingdoms of Nagpur and Berar on firm foundations. The importance of his position as such has always been recognised in local history. Thus, before his death, Raghuji the Great had laid the foundation of a territorial state, nominally subordinate to the Head of the Maratha Empire, which comprised the following areas:-

(a) The former Raj Gond states of Devgarh and Chanda with their dependencies.

(b) The former Rajput states of Chhatisgarh (Raipur and

Ratanpur) with their dependencies.

(c) The Rajput state of Sambalpur with its dependencies; and

(d) The Mughal province of Orissa with its dependencies.†

The acquisition of this vast territory speaks for Raghuji generalship. Over this wide tract of country he asserted an exclusive right to the collection of the revenue. From Bengal and Bihar, he claimed an annual payment of twelve lakh of rupees by way of Chauth. In Berar he claimed the right to share the revenue with the Nizam under the curious system of do-amli, besides appropriating to himself the fortresses of Gawilgarh, Narnala and Manikdurg with the districts immediately dependent on them. He might have lost a few battles but he always won the war.

In diplomacy he was second to none. By his mounting success he won the confidence of Shahu and on critical occasions he was consulted by him. Shahu, prior to his death, had called Raghuji to Satara to discuss the matter of succession to the Chhatrapati's throne.

Nor did Raghuji's successes end here. On the death of King Shahu in 1749, he was summoned to Satara where, as the leader of the Maratha Sardars, his attitude had a decisive influence on the course of events. His personal ambition was now controlled by the caution of age and the admonition of experience, and in spite of the fact that Shahu's adoption of Raghuji's son Mudhoji, which had been strongly convassed, was negatived by the dramatic discovery of a direct heir of Shivaji, in the person of Ram Raja, a son of Shivaji II, Balaji Peshwa secured Raghuji's support in his favour.

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† SEE MAP ON PAGE, 314 A.

Raghuji approved of Ram Raja's succession to the titular sovereignty, escorted him to Poona and received in return from his complainsance new Sanads for Berar, Gondwana and Bengal.

Raghuji and the Peshwa were not always on good terms with each other. Raghuji always avoided an open clash with Baji Rao knowing well his ability as also the influence he wielded over the Chhatrapati. On the other hand Raghuji's valour kept the Peshwa alert and the clever Peshwa also knew the power of Raghuji, so he was always careful to keep a compromising attitude with Raghuji and acting on the advice of his brother Chimnaji Appa, the Peshwa settled his differences with Raghuji amicably. But actually neither Baji Rao nor his son Balaji was able to command the services of Raghuji in their capacity as the Peshwa or Prime Minister. So long as Shahu was alive such differences were not allowed to take a serious turn. After Shahu's death Raghuji respected the Peshwa's authority. He did not join the Peshwa's opponents in the Maratha confederacy, being convinced that he was the ablest man among the Marathas to occupy the Peshwaship.

Due to the strained relationship between Raghuji and the Peshwa, the latter also doubted the sincerity of Raghuji, as in one of his letters to Ram Chandra Baba he writes, "Raghuji entered into Mahar division. He came from Berar. His desire is to collect Ghasdana tax from our territory. This intention of Raghuji is being conveyed to me by different Mahal officers. Raghuji writes big letters showing regards and expresses brotherly feeling. But this is not true. He is a pretender and you known this. We should also

write him affectionate letters.(10)" Shrewd and alert as both the Peshwa and Raghuji were, they fully realised the advantage of preserving amity with each other and of fully cooperating in measures of mutual benefit. He adroitly avoided an open rupture with the Peshwa. As Baji Rao wrote to Chimnaji Appa. "Raghuji is very bold and wise. We have to control him, because he had defeated Avaji Kavade. But this is no time to displease him, as Nadirshah is going to attack our country. So we have to take Raghuji into our confidence, and should cooperate with him, instead of passing strictures against him."(11)

When Raghuji found that Karnatak was not a congenial field for his ambitious designs, he transferred his activities to the north, and north-east, where in 1742, he precipitated an open conflict with the new Peshwa Balajirao, a conflict which, unlike that of the Dabhade ten years before, happily had no tragic consequences. It was eventually adjusted at Satara by Raja Shahu in the autumn of 1743. Thereafter, the two prominent figures, Raghuji and the Peshwa though often mutually jealous and plunged into intrigues against one another, managed nevertheless to avoid an open clash, and often actually joined hands in furthering the extension and prestige of the Maratha Raj. This proves that Raghuji had a compromising attitude for settling the matters amicably.

Indeed, the fact that Shahu's death passed off without a bloody revolution is mainly due to the good sense of Raghuji, who,

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10. Kavyaitihas Sangraha No.59.
11. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, p.334.

though repeatedly urged by the King to visit him on his death bed, managed to postpone his arrival at Satara till after his master's death and until the succession of Ram Raja had been finally settled. Having clearly grasped the position of affairs at that critical juncture, and having been convinced that the Peshwa alone was capable of handling the critical situation to the best advantage, Raghuji gave the latter his whole-hearted support, in spite of the pressure brought to bear upon him from influential quarters. Had Raghuji joined the intrigues of Tarabai and Damaji Gaikwad, the odd would probably have been too strong for the Peshwa to cope with and would possibly have launched the kingdom upon a disastrous civil war. This phase of Raghuji's character is disclosed in numerous papers belonging to those times.

Raghuji knew well when to oppose and when to yield to his opponents. He was not prepared to allow matters to be carried to the breaking point un-necessarily. In one of his letters to Nana Peshwa, he writes, "the late Shrimant Bajirao was kind to me. But difference arose when we had a clash with Avaji Kavde who had entered Berar. All these matters should now be forgotten and I should be treated as your man."(12) Peshwa on learning the news of the death of Raghuji, wrote,- "Raghuji was a respectable nobleman. His death indeed a matter of great regret. Of late Raghuji was of much help to us."(13)

Raghuji was not the man to submit either to threats or to

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12. S.P.D. XX, p.30.

13. Ibid., p.68.

hostilities. Even Tarabai appealed to the Maratha blood of Raghuji and Fateh Singh Bhonsle to save the state from Brahman domination but none of them listened to her as the Peshwa had already taken them into his confidence and they were whole heartedly supporting his policy. Tarabai kept up to the last secret political relations with all the leading Maratha Sardars such as Raghuji Bhonsle, Fateh Singh Bhonsle, the Angre brothers, the Gaikwads, and the Dabhades.(14) All this shows the importance of Raghuji in the Maratha Court. He was occasionally consulted on all important matters of state, and was sent on war expeditions to distant places in the land. His presence and policies kept the Peshwa alert, so the Peshwa also adopted an attitude of compromise towards Raghuji, and did not oppose him openly. During the last years of his life his relations with the Peshwa and King Ram Raja were very cordial. The Peshwa also showed his full confidence in him. The clever Raghuji knew the weaknesses of Tarabai, and he was always careful to keep her in good humour by fluttering her vanity by outward submission. He never opposed openly the plans and policies of Tarabai, but he also did not submit to her intrigues and unworthy party politics. This is also another proof of his independent nature.

Raghuji was not slow to grasp the political situation prevailing in the area from the distant Karnatak to Gondwana, and he finally threw his lot with Shahu, who was by then a well-settled Chhatrapati. This was indeed a wise decision which benefitted Raghuji, as also the Maratha expansion.

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14. S.P.D.VI, 211 and 213.

The Nizam got the support of the English and the French. They did influence the politics of those times and played a prominent part in bringing out the ups and downs of the Indian rulers and powers. They, however, did not help the Marathas, but helped their opponents. In spite of these odds, Raghuji was successful in establishing the Maratha authority in the far off south-east region of India, which was lost due to the jealousy of the Peshwa for him.

Many people think and opine that owing to the ambitions of Raghuji, the Peshwa with the intention of keeping him away from his own sphere of activity in the north, had shown him the way of activity to fulfil his ambition in the eastern coast of Bengal and Karnatak, and in this way he directed the ambitious activities of one of his rivals to another side of India. Raghuji also wanted to get the robes of Peshwaship after the death of Baji Rao I, and the throne of the Maratha kingdom after the death of the issuless King Shahu. That is why the Peshwa tried his best to keep Raghuji away from his own path of victory and influence. If Shahu and the Peshwa would have guided him properly and would have shared his troubles and responsibilities, Raghuji would have been able to achieve far greater results in his plans and policies than he was actually able to.

Raghuji was also a very troublesome Sardar of Shahu. He disobeyed the King Shahu and harassed him like anything in paying to him the annual tribute,(15) but still the King used to praise

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15. Shejwalkar, T.S.- Nagpur Affairs, Vol.I, p.193.

him.(16) He broke his relation from the Maratha Mandal and created his own independent kingdom.(17) 'Both Kanhoji Bhonsle and Raghuji Bhonsle, were brave and powerful and had the courage to oppose the King or the Peshwa, but Kanhoji Bhonsle was an eccentric, and Raghuji was very shrewd and politically wise. Kanhoji was a total failure but Raghuji became very famous. He extended the territories of the Maratha Raj. Ranoji had entrusted all his work to Raghuji.(18)

Raghuji was a personal favourite of King Shahu. He used all his influence with the King to prevent the nomination of Bajirao's son Balaji as the first minister. The King, however, was wise enough to see that for all his skill as a hunter and his courage as a soldier, Raghuji was unfit to be the Peshwa.

Raghuji had pretensions (founded on his descent) to the state of Satara, favoured the eventual accomplishment of those pretensions, but the dread of the superior power of the Peshwa prevented him from fulfilling those pretensions. Under these circumstances it cannot be supposed that the Raja of Berar considered himself to be subordinate to the Peshwa, although it was in his interest to act with him on important occasions, as a member of that empire of which the Peshwa was the executive civil authority. On those occasions when they met, the Raja of Berar was treated (in consequence of his

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16. Purandare Daftar-Vol.I, No.140.
17. Sardesai, G.S.; Marathi Riyasat, p.335.
18. Shejwalkar, op.cit., p.125 ; Sardesai, op.cit., p.374.

descent) as superior in rank, and, in his capacity as the first constituent member of the empire, claimed the right of sending to the Peshwa an address of honour on his accession to office.(19)

Hastings on July 9, 1778, paid his tribute to Raghuji in these words:- "Mudhoji Bhonsle's family has always borne a considerable rank among the powers of India. His father Raghuji subjected the provinces of Bengal to the Chauth under the government of the most able chief that ever ruled them."

The rise of the Nagpur kingdom did not take up in the time of Great Shivaji. When Shahu came to Maharashtra after his release from the Mughal Camp, Bhonsles did help him in making his position strong. Thence the Bhonsles of Nagpur became part and parcel of the Maratha Raj. Due to the ambitious and powerful Raghuji, the power of this house began to grow, and many parts of eastern and southern regions of India came under his sway.(20)

Forrester gives an account of Nagpur State in these words, "The revenue of Nagpur were computed at a crore of rupees in the time of Raghuji, who being at the head of a large army and generally in the field, collected a tribute from all the territories intervening between his capital and Bengal".(21) Later on it yielded only 59 lakhs. The military reputation of the Nagpur House was at its highest during Raghuji's reign.

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19. Extracted from pp. 256-257 of Bengal Papers relative to the Maratha war of 1803 printed in order of the House of Commons 5th and 22nd.June, 1804.
20. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol. VI, p.167.
21. Rennell-Memoire of a map of Hindustan, p.cxxix-cxxxi.

Raghuji should receive the major portion of the credit for the prosperity of Nagpur. He brought along with him a number of Maratha and Brahman families from western Maharashtra, who infused new order and life in the administration of Nagpur and Berar. Cultivation in and around Nagpur improved under Raghuji. A number of Kumbi or cultivators' families settled in the territory under Raghuji. The credit for settling the weavers of Kost also goes to Raghuji.

The Maratha rule in the Nagpur territories constituted for the mass of the people an immense advance upon the system of government, which had preceded it. Before the Marathas came, the country was divided into a number of petty semi-indigenous principalities. Each of these was again subdivided into big and small chiefships. The states themselves were frequently at war and were always at enemity with each other, and every bigger and smaller chief was ready, as soon as external control was relaxed, to break out into hostilities with his neighbours. There could have been under such a system but slender security for life and property and but little encouragement for either trade or agriculture. But under the sway of the Bhonsles, "the country is said much to have improved and to have received a great increase of population."(22) Jenkins's verdict that the advent of Marathas "no doubt accelerated the general prosperity", may be accepted as authoritative.(23)

With Raghuji the Great, the great days of the Nagpur have had in fact departed. Just as the Mughal Empire attained its greatest

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22. Jenkins, R.; Report of 1827, p.106.

23. Ibid., p.75.

strength and almost its maximum extension in the life of Akbar the Great, so the Nagpur state reached the zenith of its political and military reputation under Raghuji. His vigorous personality consolidated the kingdom, and drew from it a revenue which his sons Janoji and Mudhoji could never raise. The power of the Nagpur State began to decline under Janoji. Raghuji admitted no partner to his territorial control, while his successors were hampered by the semi-independent status which custom conferred on their near-relations in important appanges such as Chanda and Chhatisgarh.

His four sons could not keep up the reputation of the Nagpur House. After his death, dissension arose between his four sons and none could look after the vast empire left by him. The difference between the two Bhonsle brothers weakened their power. Nagpur, after the death of Raghuji, became a hot bed of political intrigues. Many courtiers exploited the family faction for their selfish ends. The two brothers were finally reconciled to each other, because Janoji, who was without a son, decided to adopt Mudhoji's son as his successor. The credit for this amity, however, goes to the situation than to the wisdom of either of the brothers. The Peshwa had used both his effection and good offices in solving their internal dispute, but with no result. Their wisdom and valour was of no use to the state.(24)

The Maratha States were never content to be self supporting, and Raghuji's greatness really vested on his far-flung military expeditions. A leader who carried his arms to Allahabad in the north,

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24. Sardesai, G.S., Marathi Riyasat, Vol.VI, p.167.

to Madras in the south, and to Bengal in the east was a man worth following. Thus his activities were not confined to the Nagpur state only, but spread to a far greater area of this country. His vigour in the field brought him wealth, made his services popular, and won for him a great reputation.

Like Bajirao I, Raghuji too was loved by his followers. He had capable and trustworthy persons like Bhaskar Pant, Raghuji Karande, Tuloji Pant, Naroji Jachak, Rakhmaji Ganesh, Krishnaji Atole, and others as his adherants. Baburao Konher Kolhatkar was his intimate adviser, who cooperated with Janoji; Raghuji's ablest son, in transacting current business pertaining to his rule of Nagpur. The leniency with which he treated the Gond Raja deserves particular mention, as it shows a trait of humanity in the Marathas worthy of highest pitch of civilization. He not only abstained from all sorts of personal violence, but allotted three lakh of rupees annually for the Gond Raja's maintenance and the fort for him to live in by no means as under confinement. He suitably rewarded the person who rendered help to him. As this narration illustrates, "The country from Dongertaul to this village (Luckna-down) an extent of 71 miles is held in Jagner by Mohammad Ummekhan, a Pitan Chief, to whose father the great Raghoji, the first granted it in reward for services during his reduction of the Gondwana and the northern part of Berar." (25) Raghuji had the real ability and strong character which distinguished Baji Rao the Peshwa, or even Jaswant Rao Holkar. But after him none of the Bhonsles had possessed those qualities.

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25. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.77.

Raghuji had the twin qualities for success in politics and diplomacy-cunningness and treachery. Appaji had complained to the Peshwa that he was harrassed by Raghuji when he was left to manage the affairs of the Peshwa's estate in his absence and complained that these were not relieved by his master.(26) Sometimes he used to behave in a very peculiar way. Keso Krishna Shambekar had written to Vishwanath Bhat that he could not enjoy the Mamlat of Akot due to the queer nature of the Bhonsle. In Berar there was famine on account of want of rain, and so there was no sowing of Rabi crop. But still he had to pay Rs. 30,000 for that year's Rasad to Raghuji, and Rs.1,000 to Mudhoji and Rs.11,000 for miscellaneous expenses. Beside this Krishnaji Govind and Raghuji Karande and other concerned persons had gathered together at Akot to receive the Ghasdana amount. Raghuji did not grant any concession in realising the dues, to Shambekar for all these natural calamities.(27) His attitude was also very defiant which set at naught the authority of the Peshwa, and of Fateh Singh Bhonsle. The Peshwa was informed about the movements of Raghuji and his independent dealings with the Nawab Safdar Ali Khan.

Raghuji was a little but selfish by nature. He welcomed the news of Chimnaji's death, because he was relieved of the check on his activities. He made himself the master of the situation and realised large amounts of money from the Nawab Safdar Ali by promising him help when the latter would be in difficulty. He even instigated

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26. S.P.D.,XX, 6.

27. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V, No.26 of 29.10.1752.

the Nawab of Arcot, who began to give evasive replies to the Peshwas demands of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi; and evaded the payment of all these dues.(28) He could not trust everybody. Nobody could know his whereabouts when marching with his troops. Raghuji marched towards north without divulging the place of his destination.(29)

His financial position was always very bad. He was always full of debt. He could not return the money to those from whom he had borrowed. Therefore, he was harassed by his creditors. Only Vishwanath Bhat Vaidya got his account settled. To fill up his empty treasury, he used to realise money by fair means or foul. He demanded a ransom of three lakh of rupees for Jankiram's son's release, and illegally recovered the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages.(30) For this action of his, Shahu had to issue a strict warning to the agent of Raghuji, against recovering the revenue of Pratinidhi's six inam villages. Sometimes Shahu had to take strict action against the aggressive attitude of Raghuji.(31) Thus Raghuji used to adopt an aggressive attitude, whenever such an opportunity would arise. He was a political genius-an expert in war tactics, administration and diplomacy. In diplomacy he was second to none; only Santaji Ghorpade could come on par with him in war tactics. In diplomacy it would appear that Nana Saheb Peshwa was far superior to Raghuji, but in establishing a separate kingdom, there was none other

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28. S.P.D. XXVIII, 9 and 10.
29. Ibid., XX, 42.
30. Ibid., XX, 6 and 46; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1946.
31. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.38 of 3.11.1746.

than Raghuji. He was the leader of those who opposed the plans and policies of the Peshwa. The Peshwas rose due to their family background, but the glory of Raghuji rests on his own valour and efforts. His best kingdom speaks of his glory during the Peshwa's time. He was first of all a very good soldier, and he had faith in his troops. It is said, "Raghuji did not keep a single pie with him. All money he used to spend on his soldiers with their advice. He never uttered a single word when he was short of money. He used to say, "that is right which God wills." He was not a luxury-loving person. He did not want to rest or relax and used to take his food on the horse back when riding on it."(32) This shows his sense of duty and large heartedness.

Besides being a very good soldier, he was a very intelligent man, courageous and active. He kept himself well informed and was occasionally consulted by others in all important matters of the state. He was also a very good hunter and a bold horseman. King Shahu was also very fond of hunting. Therefore, he used to take Raghuji along with him in his hunting expeditions. Once he saved the life of Shahu from the claws of a tiger. Therefore, Shahu was pleased with Raghuji and he in turn took advantage of Shahu's favour.

He was not an anti-Brahmin. Duff has charged him, with being jealous of the Peshwas due to the Brahmin ascendancy. But this seems to be wrong. He had many trustworthy Brahmin Sardars like Tuljoram, Bhaskarram Kolhatkar, Shivaji Keshav Talkute, and politicians

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32. Gupte, K.R., op.cit., p.38.

like Konherram Kolhatkar, Vyankoji, Ragho Ballal, and Raghunath Bhat Jhipre Patwardhan, etc., who had worked with him. There is a letter which shows how Raghuji helped the Brahmins of Mehkar. They had complained to Raghuji that they were harassed by his troops. Thereupon, Raghuji gave them a letter of assurance that in future they would not be harassed in any way.(33) This is a proof that he was not anti-Brahman, but had sympathy with every class of people, and there were no caste feelings in him. Mamaji Tembrekar of Nagpur, who is very rarely mentioned in other papers wrote to Vishwanath Bhat about the relations between the members of the Bhonsle family and that of Raghuji Karande. They, he said, "were against the brahmins, and wanted to get rid of them."(34) This casting of blame by Mamaji Tembrekar seems to be incorrect.

According to the tradition, and customs of those times, Raghuji had also six wives and seven concubines. Out of these thirteen women, six became satis after his death.(35) Besides his four legitimate sons, he had an illegitimate son also, named Mohan Singh. (36) The Subah of Chhatisgarh was given to Mohan Singh. Perhaps he had a weakness for the fair sex. Once he was attracted towards two daughters of a bangle-seller of Nagpur. He ordered that those two girls should be brought to his Darbar. Hearing this the bangle seller became very furious, and refused to send his daughters to him. Upon this Raghuji ordered that the bangle seller's house be plundered and he be brought before him.(37) In fact his private life

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33. Vidarbhanteel Aitihasik Lekh Sangraha, Vol.I,No.35.
34. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.27, of 3.11.1952.
35. S.P.D. XX,79 and 80; Vaidya Daftar, Vol.V,No.60.
36. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.30 of August, 1746.
37. S.P.D.XX, 34. This letter throws valuable light on Raghuji's character and his ways of doing things.

was influenced by the customs of those times. Even two years Before his death, he had intended to marry the daughter of Deoji Shirke, but due to certain reasons the marriage was postponed.(38) In 1748, Raghuji had the plan of marrying again at the time of the marriage of his daughter.(39)

He was very pious by nature. He was an ardent devotee of Ram, although his family deity was Shankar. He installed the idol of Ram at Ramtek and revived the importance of this place of epic fame. On his letter head, he used to write 'Sitakanta'. He used to pay due respect to the sadhus and saints, as also to Ramdasi Devbaba of Bhandara and to Pirasha Muslim Saint. This shows that he had no communal feelings in his heart of hearts. He made land grants to many temples and holy places. When Raghuji was in Karnatak, there a sadhu gave him the idol of Ramchandra as a Prasad and asked him to worship that idol, and said that he would be benefitted. Shahu also permitted him to use the flag of God Ramchandra. He gave him the Bhagwan flag and Jari Patka as his flag. From that time the Jari Patka and the saffron coloured flag became the emblems of Raghuji's army. (40) He respected the family of Ramaji Pant Kolhatkar till the end of his life, because he had taught him the worship of Ram.

Raghuji was also interested in building towns etc. "He was the founder of the city of Nagpur, which he surrounded with a rampart,

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38. Vaidya Daftar, Vol.IV, No.4 of 13.5.1753.
39. Ibid., No.20 of 506.1748.
40. Nagpur Kagadpatra, essay No.8; Aitihasik Patravyavahar,No.7.

formerly it was only an insignificant village, appertaining to the fort prior to his capture of it. It is situated on a fine high plain which is richly cultivated and produces fine wheat and bounded by hills to the north-west and south. The Nag river, a rivulet running to the southward, gives name to the town. The houses are generally neatly built and covered with files, the streets are narrow and filthy."(41) He made Nagpur his ihdependent place of living,but still he did not leave the side of the Peshwa. The essentially Maratha character of the town of Nagpur, which was in many respects a prominent rival to Satara, indicated that Raghuji and his co-adjustors took incessant pains to transfer to that place a fresh stock of Deccan people of all classes and to colonise with them the north-eastern regions of central India, in order to bring them under a refining influence. After conquering the Gond kingdoms he made Nagpur a grand capital of his kingdom. He contributed greatly to its political, social and cultural life. His successor Janoji took part in the wars between the Peshwa and the Nizam. But later on he had in turn betrayed both of them, contrary to the policy of his father. Consequently the Peshwa and the Nizam, both of them united against him and sacked and burnt Nagpur in 1765. Amraoti town is said to have been founded by Raghuji. At one time there was a representative of the Nizam, as well as one of the Bhonsle, at the place. Bhonsle used to receive 60 p.c. and the Nizam 40 p.c. of the revenue.(42)

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41. Wills, C.U., Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories, p.72.
42. Lyall, A.C., Berar Gazetteer, p.157.

Raghuji, with good taste selected a site, Wun-Bham, for his residence. It was at this place that Raghuji had, it is said, a divine information of the bright future that lay before him, that of rising to regal power, and it was from this place that he had fled on one horse to Devgarh to escape assassination by Kanhoji and his son Rayaji.(43)

In the long and distinguished galaxy of Maratha Chiefs, Raghuji Bhonsle was unequalled for the doings and originality of his genius and value of his achievements. The story of Raghuji deals with twenty seven eventful years of Maratha history. He is being looked upon as one of the greatest personalities in Maratha history and the story of his career has an abiding interest. His achievements may be summed up as the establishment of the Maratha supremacy in the south-east and of political hegemony in the north. When he rose as leader of the Maratha people, the Maratha State was in a perilous condition. It was a house divided against itself, menaced on the east by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan, its march southward was barred by the Nawab of Arcot and Trichinopoly, and its southern sea-coast was in the foreign hands. In this way when the Maratha affairs were in a state of turmoil and utmost confusion, there appeared on the Maratha side a soldier of enterprise and courage, Raghuji Bhonsle. During the critical period of 1740-1755, his role was in no way inferior to that of any other character who passed across the screen of history. He played a notable part in the Maratha struggle against the Mughals in the 18th century. When Mughals had the upper hand in the political affairs of this country

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43. Lyall, A.C.,Berar Gazetteer, p.179.

and all seemed lost after the death of Shivaji, he successfully opposed and faced the authority of Mughals in far off Karnatak, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It shows how the courage of a single individual can materially affect the course of history. At his death he left the nation strong and united. His friendship was solicited by the Rajputs, the Mughals and the Marathas alike.

His greatest diplomatic triumph was entering into the treaty with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan of Bengal, securing to Shahu, Shivaji's conquests and legitimatizing the Maratha claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi over the Subahs of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He thus knew at first hand the currents and cross-currents of home as well as of foreign politics. He laid firmly the foundation of Maratha power in the territories of Garha-Mandala and other small, principalities beyond the Narbada, and paved the way for a further advance. He understood too well that the repudiation of these claims was a challenge to the Marathas and would involve him in a long protracted struggle with them, but he was not a man to surrender his authority without a contest. He behaved the Marathas to deal with the Nizam tactfully. That Raghuji won him over to his side was due to his successful diplomacy.

In the Maratha history one is bound to give a honourable place to Raghuji. By his victories and the acquisition of vast kingdom, he brought the Maratha power to its zenith, though in the beginning of the nineteenth century it was destined to be wiped out from the map of India. Even before the independence, the kingdoms of Sindhia, Holkar and Gaikwad were in existence, but the kingdom of the Bhonsles of Nagpur had fallen. It was due to his incapable sons,

who could not keep up its flag high. Along with Raghuji, the power of the English had also begun to rise in Bengal. Due to family dissensions, the Bhonsle brothers became more or less inactive. That period was a period of much political activity in Indian history. As it has been said- "A state comes to ruin through disunity and this disunity becomes the cause of destruction of countless households."

Raghuji had a remarkable personality, which for nearly thirty years bulked largely in Maratha history. He was the first and most distinguished of the Bhonsle rulers of Nagpur. He was by far the most formidable of the Maratha Chiefs, both by the extent of his dominions, and the goodness and number of his troops. On the whole in the Maratha operations no small part was played by Raghuji. He was not a man who would allow his grip on the conquered provinces to relax. He knew the value of continuous hammering. He perceived that the only practicable policy that could succeed in the circumstances was the policy of 'going through'. After having effected the conquest of Orissa and being arrived at a final understanding with the Nawab Aliwardi Khan in 1751, Raghuji led a peaceful life and did not concern himself with the various important projects and expeditions which the Peshwa restlessly carried out in the Karnatak region, because he had long been suffering from a stomach complaint and was almost bedridden during the last two or three years of his life. This great general who extended the Maratha power as far as Katak, breathed his last at Nagpur on February 14, 1755. Thus till his death Raghuji remained a personality to be reckoned with in the politics of Maharashtra.

Thus ends the saga of a great Maratha Chief, brave and fair,

Raghuji died a most fascinating figure in a romance of war and intrigues.

He occupies an important place in Maratha history during the Pre-Panipat period and is also partly responsible for the ups and downs of Maratha history in his time. It is less widely realised how prominent and independent a part he played in shaping the history of this country. Hence he deserves to be accorded his due place among the heroes of Maratha history and we should do justice to this remarkable ruler and statesman whose exploits fill such a wide canvas of India's history.